




Bequeathed to
The Library
of the
University of Toronto
by
Professor W. S. Milner

W. S. Milner



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE GRECIANS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THIRTY-SIX POEMS

Adelphi Press. 2s. 6d.

"There is not likely to be written in our days much poetry more exquisitely wrought."—*The Nation*.

"There is not one poem which lacks the stamp of his individuality. His technique is admirable."—*The Athenæum*.

"Mr. Flecker is an artist, not an amateur."—*The English Review*.

THE GRECIANS

A DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION

BY

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

*Sometime Scholar of Trinity College, Oxford
and Student Interpreter at Caius College, Cambridge
Author of "Thirty-six Poems," etc.*



258763
3.9.31

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.

NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO. 1910

PREFACE

IN a technical matter such as education only the experienced seem to me to have a right to speak. For this reason only I think it worth while mentioning that I was educated in one public school, and have lived most of my life in another; that I passed four years at Oxford and two at Cambridge, and that it has been my duty as civil servant to learn some eight or nine modern languages. Literature I have practised and art I have studied, but my chief claim to the kind attention of my readers is, after all, that I myself have been many times and in many places a school-master.

I have tried to make this dialogue resemble real conversation, and have aimed at abruptness, vigour, and compression rather than at rounded periods and exact arrangement of subjects. And this I mention in case any

reader, offended by a merely artistic violence of language, may imagine it expressive of thoughtlessness or lack of sincerity on the part of the Author.

THE BRITISH CONSULATE,
CONSTANTINOPLE, *September* 1910.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	v
CHAP. I. THE THREE ENGLISHMEN	i
II. THE AIM OF EDUCATION	15
III. PHYSICAL TRAINING	43
IV. TECHNICAL TRAINING	65
V. THE GRECIANS OR TRUE EDUCATION	79

THE THREE ENGLISHMEN

THE GRECIANS

CHAPTER I

THE THREE ENGLISHMEN

OUTSIDE Bologna, that old and wise city, rises a little hill with a large prospect called San Michele. The bends of the zigzag path which leads to the summit of this so magnificent hill are embellished with delectable arbours, where fat babies play and their young nurses sleep during the long drowsy evenings of late summer. Such an evening I would have you imagine: picture to yourself the babies engaged in innocent diversions, the little nurses wandering with princely lovers in the forests of their dreams.

Suddenly a tremendous trampling startled those gentle souls. A little man with hair and beard of that ferocious orange colour which we call red, with iron-rimmed spectacles bobbing on his nose, and a heavy gold watch-chain swaying against his chest, was thunder-

ing up the hill as though it had been the Matterhorn and he an enthusiast for records. A sight to make babies cry and nursemaids laugh was Henry Hofman; and strange were the clothes of Henry Hofman, his black trousers, his Norfolk jacket, and his green tie. "Funny man!" said the babies, in Italian. "Pazzo inglese!" replied the nursemaids and slept again. Hofman paid no attention: intent on higher things he crashed through a row of trees and attained the top. Then might you have seen him stalk to the parapet, wave his arms round his head with fervour and delight, and slap himself on the chest. "Grand!" he cried. "Magnificent!" he shouted, and had he been, as his father was, a German, he would have added, "Kolossal!" Then, arms folded, foot on parapet, absurd and twisted body silhouetted against the eternal sky, he stood, he gazed, he exulted.

It was only the view over Bologna and the plain that had called forth his admiration. After all, few men are epicures in prospects. All healthy persons will climb to see a view, and it takes little to thrill these æsthetic gluttons, provided the weather be clear and

they can see plenty at one time. For no regions of this world are totally unpleasing when viewed from an eminence. Henry Hofman had seen a hundred landscapes finer than this; yet this was fair enough. A hundred miles of silver plain reflected the fitful shadows of the clouds; a faint blue haze hid and hinted the Adriatic Sea; and the peculiar quiet fire of sunset deepened to crimson the cheerful red of Bologna's roofs, and shone right through the little windows of the two great towers that dominate the city.

Let us leave him gazing at the Torre degli Asinelli and consider a companion of his who has just arrived, a very bad second. This grizzled, middle-aged man of uncertain aspect presents something of a contrast to Hofman. We note the new-comer's rather fine features, marred by an incessant frown; we approve the decent obscurity and neutral tint of his clothes. His raiment well brushed, without style or flair, seems to be like its wearer, to be something to which no one could reasonably object. His method of walking, moreover, is unobtrusive; his voice as he exclaims, "Here we are, Hofman!" is not annoyingly brusque or strident, but verges on a mellow

cheerfulness. Yet beneath the contrast which these two men present lurks resemblance; and the indefinable, ineradicable stamp of a great profession marks both those pairs of weary and watchful eyes.

“ Ah, it’s grand! ” shouted Hofman, “ grand! Only three days ago I was taking my horrible chemistry class, and now I am on a hill, looking at this! ”

He swept his arm round parallel to the horizon.

“ Ah, those boys indeed, ” said Edwinson quietly. “ Yes, it is pleasant to be free of them for a little—yet I am fond of them, very fond of them. At my age I couldn’t give it up: I couldn’t do anything else but teach. It’s dull work, our trade of instruction; but there are times when I feel it’s rather a grand work. Now this city, Hofman, is the foster-mother of education; Bologna has one of the oldest universities of Europe. Teaching in those days must have been much more delightful, when each new book read was a new country explored, and each pupil taught was a new friend won. What a beautiful city it is with all those useless, insolent, aspiring towers—so like Oxford in

a way, and so emblematic of that profitless, beautiful training of the mind we try to give."

"So like the education you mediævalists try to give," grunted Hofman. "I have to teach facts. But it's getting late and dark."

"And all the ways are shadowy," broke in Edwinson, quoting the stock translation of Homer. "And I am hungry. Let us go down to the city and eat."

So saying the unobtrusive Edwinson took his companion's arm, a thing he had never done before during their six years of common toil, and arm-in-arm they sauntered down the hill.

To explain this unusual, almost emotional impulse on the part of Edwinson, we must remark that it was the first visit of these two men to Italy. Indeed, it was their first day in the country if we exclude the inevitable halt in dreary northern Milan. True, they had been twice abroad together before; they had been for one walking tour in Brittany, and one in the Black Forest. But as a rule Hofman spent his winter holidays with his people at Gospel Oak and visited a seaside resort—Southsea or Worthing—in summer. With equal regularity Edwinson retired to

Hampstead, or in the bright season of the year took some of his more brilliant and attractive pupils with him for a reading party in Devonshire. This Italian journey had been a bold venture, meticulously pre-arranged. Expenses, routes, second class fares had been calculated with nicety and a Baedeker; and there had been much diligent self-teaching in a tongue which Hofman found hard and learnt thoroughly and Edwinston found easy and mastered ill. The whole thing was an Event. Events are rare in the pedagogic life.

When they reached the walls of Bologna—Italian cities are still walled—they took a tram which passed along the endless lovely arcaded sheets, and brought them back to the vast central square that has its name from Neptune. They had decided against dining at their hotel, and sauntered vaguely along the Via Ugo Bassi to find a suitable place of refreshment—no easy task when sumptuary expense is to be avoided and cheap squalor shunned. At last they halted, and boldly pushed open a creaking door; for favourable chance had led them to the Toscana. Here in term-time assemble the

students of Bologna; here, when there are no students, the modest traveller is welcomed with cordiality and served with dispatch.

They seated themselves, and Edwinson suggested timidly that the wine of the country might be both cheap and good.

"Wine?" said Hofman. "Of course we will drink wine. The water would probably be poisonous."

Their debate was cut short by the arrival of their wine, unbidden, in a shapely wicker-covered flask. Next, at Hofman's unhesitating command, arrived spaghetti (this dish had a lot of local colour, but they found it dull) and veal cutlets alla Milanese, which strong men eat every night: and they ate this and drank enormously of the wine, conversing and laughing without cease.

The restaurant was full; the waiters rushed about: the incessant clatter of spoons and forks and knives on plates, dishes, and glasses was most exhilarating; while expectoration was, for Italy, comparatively rare.

The two friends were only half way through their cutlets when they were disagreeably interrupted by the arrival of a stranger, who hung up a sort of large felt sombrero in such

a way as to obscure Hofman's old but comfortable cap, and prepared to sit down beside them. Hofman was bored and, being an honest man, immediately looked what he felt. Edwinston drummed with his fingers on the table.

"I hope you will excuse me," said the stranger to them in pleasant English, "but the place is quite full."

Looking up, they saw before them a young man of elegant figure and handsome appearance, indeed, a remarkably splendid young man. Hofman thought to himself that the new-comer had rather a womanish face. But he ignored the strong chin and resolute thin mouth, and was considering only the complexion. If Hofman had justly realised his own feelings in the matter he would have found out that he esteemed all beauty a rather womanish thing, unworthy of serious attention. Edwinston meanwhile gazed intently on the young man and since he held the neo-pagan idea of Greece, mentally raved about Apollo. Yet no one could have been more unlike the swarthy, straight-nosed Greeks than this merry-eyed young man, with long, light hair, high cheek bones, and

a vivid colouring: no one was less like a lay figure for idealists than this youth with his strong torso and his whimsical and lively countenance. However, Edwinson's admiration of the fascinating stranger even increased when he heard him order special local dishes and wines with an Italian accent so graceful and correct that it seemed far above anything a mere native could possibly have achieved.

By the time the young man turned to look at the two schoolmasters their ill-humour had vanished and their conversation, instigated by Chianti and an audience, had become more brilliant than ever. To Edwinson returned the fire of his Oxford days: for long ago no one more often than he had sent the sun—and the moon too—to bed with talking. Social qualities, said his friends, had spoilt his chances (never too brilliant, it must be confessed) of academical distinction. Hofman was once more the penurious lad who, in the rare hours snatched from the arduous study of science, used to electrify the Gospel Oak Ethical Club with his incisive wit and outrageous opinions. The stranger put in a word here and there, yet hardly entered into the conversation, but maintained

a mysterious though friendly reserve. He vouchsafed nothing about himself save that his name was Harold Smith, a severe blow to Edwinson, who had imagined him to be of noble parentage.

When the meal was at an end Hofman was so delighted with their new acquaintance that he was preparing to ask him to come and take coffee with them; but he was forestalled by Smith, who leant over towards them and, in a voice of extreme charm and gentleness, said, "I hope you will do me the favour of coming round to my place: I have a little room of my own in a back street here which we may find a little pleasanter than any café."

They willingly accepted this novel invitation and followed their guide through the colonnades of Bologna, whither they knew not. They entered a low and obscure doorway, toiled up a painful staircase, turned a corner, and found themselves in the sitting-room of Smith. It was a small room, but comfortable beyond all an Italian's dreams, and beautiful enough to satisfy the most exacting of Cambridge æsthetes. A dim reddish light suggested tapestried hangings,

surprising pictures, and innumerable books: yet for all the display of furniture and fabrics in a little space the room was mysteriously cool. Hofman, turning his eyes to the bookshelves, as reading men will, was delighted to find his beloved moderns, Teutonic and Scandinavian, bound in pigskin and arranged in order; while Edwinson marked with delight the rows devoted to the classics, for he was a devoted scholar, although so pathetically second class. Smith let them busy themselves with inspection while he prepared an excellent coffee: soon they drank it not unaccompanied by seductive liqueurs. Then pipes were lighted with English tobacco, glasses filled with Scotch whisky, and there sank into arm-chairs worthy of the noblest university traditions two happy middle-aged schoolmasters, clothed in drab and a little beside themselves; and then it was that Harold stood before them with uplifted glass and swore in Italian, German, and English that they should drink the health of their glorious profession, and drain their glasses to the Education of Youth.

THE AIM OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER II

THE AIM OF EDUCATION

SMITH roused no enthusiasm by proposing this toast. Hofman started and groaned, and Edwinson remarked sadly that he wanted to forget that dire, unspeakable thing.

Smith. Is it possible that you hate your work, and that you are sincere in expressing your unhappiness? One would think there could be nothing more delightful than training the young and watching the subtle dawn of intelligence.

Edwinson. Our work has its compensations, my dear Smith. Yet I cannot conceive of any vocation more disheartening, toilsome, and unpleasant.

Smith. Yet perhaps you have not really any standard of comparison. What evidence have you that members of other professions are more cheerful than schoolmasters?

Edwinson. I think I have some evidence.

I have often been in the City and observed narrowly the faces of the business men who pour out of the tube terminus. Anxious those faces often are, pale, feverish, elated with success, dejected with impending ruin; yet none of them were languid, none bored. Now you know, perhaps, that there is a special service held for schoolmasters and members of the Teachers' Union once a year in the chapel of some great public school!¹ I once attended such a service. There in a narrow space were collected some two hundred head and assistant masters. A more tragic sight I have never seen. It may be that the sermon, preached by a young Anglican of great eminence, had affected me strangely: but I know that when I left the chapel I nearly wept. Thank God one does not often see a congregation of schoolmasters. Those withered trees are usually surrounded by the fair and delectable shrubs of youth: they look ill in a forest by themselves. Usually we see the usher's unromantic figure graced by the boys who flock around him; and to them he is so familiar and trite a thing that they pay no heed to his sagging trousers and

¹ Here Hofman snorted.

rusty coat, to his surly manners and unkempt hair, to his unchanging cravat and rectangular boots. But when I saw that unearthly congregation of men who had failed, whose lips were hard and their faces drawn and sallow, when I remarked the imbecile athletes who taught football, the puny scientists who expounded the dark mystery of nature, the blighted and sapless scholars who taught Plato and Catullus by the page and hour, the little wry-bodied men in spectacles who trained their pupils in *King Lear* for the Cambridge Locals, I shuddered and felt faint; for I remembered that I, too, was one of these: I, too, was rusty—I effete—I growing old.

Smith. You are convincing as to the fact, yet you hardly suggest a reason. Why is it, do you think, that teachers are such sad and bitter men?

Edwinson. It is a little difficult to explain. Perhaps it is because we don't know——

Hofman (interrupting violently). That's it. We do not know. We don't know where we are going to. We have no idea what sort of man we want to make, and while we have no definite aim we are beset by a million irrita-

tions from faddists and quacks. "Bring up boys and girls together," say some: "the school will then be a paradise." "Never teach a child what it doesn't want to know," says the benign paidophilist. God, I would like to teach him something he wouldn't like to know. "Science, grand, practical science!" says a crude person from the North: once I had faith in the crude person, before I taught grand, practical science. "Our old beautiful traditions," say people like my friend here: "there is nothing wrong except the spread of scientific knowledge." "Modern tongues, not dead ones: something really useful to help the boys to good business positions." So clamour parents who do not realise that German clerks who know six languages to perfection may be purchased for about £160 a year. "English history, how splendid, how important!" says the blustering Member of Parliament, in a speech which would shame the school debating club, when he comes to give away our prizes. "English literature," cry the dames, "up to the death of Wordsworth, but including Tennyson, not omitting Beowulf if you want to understand Shakespeare." A pox on the

fools: art, music, religion, and woodcarving—all have their votaries:—

Ce monde est plein de fous, et qui n'en veut pas voir
Doit se tenir tout seul, ou casser son miroir.

Edwinson. True, Hofman. Why, if I could get a paragraph into the *Daily Mail* suggesting that it is a disgraceful thing that our great public schools never teach Etruscan, which is not only the true foundation of any really thorough knowledge of Latin, but also a study most likely to foster mental ingenuity and deep thought, I should be styled “one of our most prominent educationalists” on the morrow. But since we are in such a vortex of new and absurd ideas, is there not some sense in keeping to the old lines? You have never understood, Hofman, and perhaps you never will, what is the true value and meaning of a classical education. Every year that this education continues to exist at all, it becomes more and more indispensable to any one who desires to understand history. We do not merely educate people to understand the world of Thucydides and Tacitus, Æschylus and Virgil, but we educate them to understand Petrarch and Ariosto, Racine and Montesquieu, Pitt and Johnson

and Pope, Milton, Landor, Shelley, Arnold, Browning, Tennyson, and Swinburne—for we have hardly had a great poet who was not a good classical scholar——

Hofman. Except Shakespeare!

Edwinson. Even that is doubtful. To know the story of literature, of law, of science and philosophy you must study the classics: while a true and just use and knowledge of the subtleties of words may be inborn in a genius, but is the natural outcome of a scholar's training.

I readily admit that certain changes ought to take place from within. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf has made what I consider to be a quite admirable suggestion. He says in effect that we ought to read all Greek literature and not confine ourselves to a little cluster of classical writers. He suggests that we should read Greek written as late as the tenth century A.D., and, indeed, the Byzantines are neither so uninteresting nor so incapable as is generally believed. With regard to the Latin tongue, I myself would rejoice to see the more suitable passages of Petronius, Apuleius, and the elegiacs of that dainty poet of the decline, Ausonius, included in

the regular course. For I am a person of liberal ideas, though Hofman will credit me with none. I think, too, that one ought to get on much faster with the books one reads and not spend a whole term droning through a book of Virgil at thirty lines a day. I believe that boys should be allowed to use translations: they are given plenty of un-seens on which to exert their minds, and I consider, though this is rather heresy, that only the most intelligent boys should be worried with Latin and Greek composition. We may teach our young Swinburnes or Jebbs to write Greek and Latin verses: I am not very much in favour of compelling the ordinary boy to undergo so severe a training.

You see, the grand old classics are waking up, Hofman. During the last few years the scientific treatment of art and archæology has made tremendous strides; while the study of folk-lore and comparative mythology is revolutionising our ideas upon Roman and Greek religion. Our comprehension of the classics has advanced more between the year 1880 and the present time than between the years 1600 and 1880. This is literally true.

Then we still find and always shall in the calm logic of Latin grammar——

Hofman (furiously). O Death! Do you dare to insinuate that any one was ever taught to think about the universe by learning perfects and supines, or those eccentrics in $-\mu$? Do you really think you are going to ennoble and modernise the classics by skipping through half a dozen wretched bastard Greek romances written by a worthless people in a worthless period, or by entertaining the lads with the cheerful heresies of the early Christian Fathers? Do you say keep the old system? Look at the result of your time-honoured plan. One scholar (that is to say, one naturally intelligent person whose intelligence you have perverted to a useless end) to a hundred wastrels (that is to say, a hundred ordinary young men whose brains you have fuddled for ever). And your one scholar, I grant you, may be a fine man—but wherein lies his salvation? In being something more than a scholar—in his self-education; in the music, art, or poetry he loves, in his appreciation of the passions and desires that sway the actual world. Can he even be a fine scholar if he comprehends not these things? Is a man

who votes Tory because he is a don fit to understand Tacitus, or a man who has never travelled over the earth fit to enjoy the *Odyssey*? Shall we give Catullus to a passionless pedant, Ovid to a man who has never known Love's kiss? Even I, who have only read the classics in translations, have a better opinion of them than that.

I don't want to substitute science as being in any way a real or complete training for the young. My humble task is to teach the boys a few facts about the real world which may help them to earn their living, and I hate all rainbow theories of education. Teach a boy, I say, to read and write and add up sums; then teach him his trade, and if you want a wider and a nobler upbringing for him, turn him loose into a good library for so many hours a day and let him learn what he likes.

Edwinson (*peevishly*). Scholars can earn their living sometimes, and a fact in Latin grammar is as much a fact as a fact in physics.

Smith. Come, brother Edwinson, I don't think you really mean that. You are arguing in a vicious circle if you maintain that a

good

classical education is a practical one because your pupils may subsequently become classical teachers. You know of the tribe which existed by taking in each other's washing. You are well enough aware that the moment the dead languages cease to be required in State or University examinations which lead to emolument the whole fabric of classical education instantly disappears, and the scholars who now secure for themselves snug and comfortable berths would then be wandering up and down the land like disembodied spirits. A few might still be needed for museums and libraries, or to teach the sons of some old-fashioned American millionaire; but the rest would die of hunger or take to breaking stones.

Now I gather that you are, both of you—even Edwinson—rather disappointed in our English middle-class education. Do you then think that nothing could be done to reform our public schools?

Hofman. I think they are in such a state that reform is impossible, and that they ought to be utterly destroyed for ever. There is better work done in the dirtiest board school or technical training college in a day

than we do in a week, and the public school is really such a loathsome place——

Smith. You seem to be quite bitter about it, Hofman. In what way do you mean that a public school is loathsome?

Hofman. Why, were you never at one of those great institutions which make England what it is, and have made Balham and Bethnal Green what they are? Have you never witnessed the weary conflict between plodding dull ushers and stolid boys? Are you unaware of our finely organised system of compulsory cricket and compulsory vice? From the first of these evils a boy can only escape by being consumptive, from the second only by becoming a moral prig. Do you not know how the monotonous hours are only varied by epidemics, whether of chicken-pox, religion, silkworm-keeping, or Sandow exercises? Do you not know the hell that awaits all boys who think for themselves, who have any moral courage, who dare to look beyond the horizon of the damned routine, who shirk games, or who shirk looking at games?

Smith. What you say has its truth. But to me it appears still worse that after this public-school life a boy should pass on to Oxford

and Cambridge, where instead of entering on a new life he will merely continue in his former ways. If it meant influence to be a good cricketer at school, why so it does in college; if chapel was compulsory at school, so it is in college; if independence meant unpopularity at school, so it does in most colleges. No new society arises to entertain the mind, no women enable him to understand the proportion of things in this world; no freedom of town life, no rousing interest in art or politics, will ever encroach on the monotony of a protracted schoolboy existence, wherein smoking, drinking, and cards are only occasionally restrained by authority.

Edwinson. I am surprised that Hofman should thus depreciate school life and that you, sir, should be so dissatisfied with the university. Consider how ninety-nine out of a hundred boys love their school, how they revel in school life, how they weep to leave it, and how they love to return and visit their old friends and masters. As for college—my days at Oxford were the only good days of my life, even though I never played cricket and football.

Smith. Do you not consider what a terrible

imputation it is against a school if even the hundredth boy (unless he be a confirmed hypochondriac) be not happy? If you feed boys well, let them play with each other, and give them a reasonable amount of liberty, it is very hard to make them miserable. And in the generous days of youth who would not be sentimental about leaving friends and associations? But what Hofman says is that the best boys are the most unhappy—and I believe that, except possibly at Eton and Winchester, this is literally what happens. The new raw athletic mushroom public school is not a very pleasant place.

Edwinson. But surely the Spartan element in our great schools is very fine. To rough it a little makes a boy independent and manly. A little bumping about—— (Here Edwinson stopped, having caught an unpleasantly hostile expression in the eye of Harold Smith.) Of course, all that is a little trite (he added lamely).

Smith. Yes, Edwinson, that's just it. A little bumping about will soon cure a boy of holding any ideas that displease his fellows, a little ridicule will soon cure Jones minor of reading Gibbon when he ought to be out in

the rain watching the house hockey match, a really hard thrashing will soon dispel young Robinson's religious doubts. Oh, yes, we will embitter the seven years of life which should be the happiest, so as to give a boy more grit and pluck in after years. It seems we run a risk, Edwinston, and draw our bow at a venture. Does the nervous, high-strung youth become a thick-skinned Briton at the end of our Spartan training? I have not observed it: heresy of heresies, I do not really desire it. But I do very much fear that a boy of original mind may become permanently embittered and peevish under our present system and never acquire that strength and cheerfulness which underlies true genius. Our Spartan ideal is productive of minor poets, of most unmanly people who, claiming sanity and reserve, are ashamed instead of proud of what they think or feel or know; and I am so eccentric as not to be entirely pleased with that other notable product of our Lacedæmonian tendencies—the hulking and vainglorious captain of the school eleven, whom I picture from memory standing crop in hand surrounded by his toadies and parasites, the terror and admira-

tion of the young. Spartan system—why, the fellow has never been kicked since his very first term, when he made such a fine score in the Junior House Match. Edwinston, if the boys in your school are not happy, burn it down.

But there is a yet further question. Have you done your best for their happiness in the days of manhood, O pedagogue? For with that you are most intimately concerned.

Hofman. Have you then revealed your secret, Smith? Is that your ideal education which produces the happy man?

Smith. Negatively, yes. That sounds cryptic: but I mean that whatever else we may strive after we fail if we do not help our pupils to be happy. In an uncertain world I take this as a postulate. But tell me, Hofman, since happiness is after all as difficult a word to explain precisely as goodness, the type of the man that you would desire to produce with the aid of education.

Hofman (with animation shining through his spectacles). I think education can do little to produce the type of man I want. I look for a man of power, an Overman, if you are not weary of the word. At any rate a man

unflinchingly honest in his thoughts and in the expression of his thoughts, unswayed by prejudice and convention, natural and strong in his desires and passions. A man who can pierce the riddle of this rather aimless existence and lead mankind to new triumphs and new glory.

Smith. And you, Edwinson, perhaps do not entirely participate in Hofman's ideal?

Edwinson. Indeed, no: he has expressed himself innocently enough, but I know he wants to turn all the nicest people into labour leaders. I confess I prefer the gentleman, if he will forgive me using a word he hates. I believe we have a duty to intimate society as well as to the state; and I believe that people with charming manners make life much more tolerable for their friends than unpleasant socialistic people.

Hofman. That is to say, gentlemen please other gentlemen.

Edwinson. It is more than that. I have known many a boy whose head was perfectly empty, yet who had such a way with him that everybody liked him from the head-master to the bootblack. But—be quiet, Hofman!—far be it from me to suggest that it is the

business of a school to produce gentlemen. In a school to which gentlemen are sent the aim must be first that the blatancy of vulgarians should be toned down by association with boys of a more refined nature; secondly to produce in those who are gentlemen by birth a refinement, not only of manner and deportment, but also of language, taste, and thought—to produce not mere gentlemen, but that type of great gentleman whom we call a gentleman and a scholar.

Smith (after a pause). Truth is dull, and I fear all I have to say is that both these ideals are excellent, and that they should and can be easily combined. But forgive me for remarking that they are ideals of admiration and not of thought. Both of you really want to produce men who shall be like yourselves.

Hofman. Or rather like our ideal selves. The men we might have been had we been blessed with opportunity.

Smith. Well, then, you want to produce, perhaps, persons whom you would like to have as friends. But shall we not consider whether it would be possible to establish our discussion on a surer basis, and try to dis-

cover, not perhaps what the ideal man is, but at least what our ideal of a man is? We can at all events eliminate the elements which displease one or other of us. And if we do come to some more or less definite agreement on the subject, we shall hope that there may be many other sensible people in the wide world who would concur with our conclusions if they were here with us to-night.

We have already laid down one postulate, that we do not want to train our people to be miserable. We will lay down another, that we are not going to train our boys as candidates for any one of the various official paradises occupied by members of the rival sects. Is then the ideal of happiness enough? For if any one were to object that to train people to be happy would be to train them to be unpleasant, selfish, useless, and ignorant, we should reply that their notions of pleasure are ridiculous and limited. Happiness then——

Edwinson. But surely you admire the noble ideas and fine morality, the devotion to work and duty, which have stamped the best men in the human race? and surely you do not believe that good men have acted merely

because they would be happier in doing good? Even if such were really the case, it would be too horrible to believe, even as it is too horrible to believe that death is the end of all things, or that this universe has no aim.

Hofman. As usual, Edwinson, you take up that miserable Peer Gynt attitude—"Let us think of the things that are pleasant, and forget those that hurt"—and you send our pupils, as he sent his mother, headlong through the gate of death with ancient folk-tales and sweet, lying harmonies in their ears. What, do you yearn, O sentimental idealist, to set up the dusty old virtues on their feet again, and to clap on the statue of Truth the shabby rags of dying religions and the enormous fig-leaf of respectability? Let us make men who can realise themselves: for I weary of your heroes of the drawing-room and the popular stage; I am sick of the cant of devotion to one's duty, one's country, and one's only girl.

Smith. But do you think that happiness will come from this self-realisation of yours?

Hofman. What matter? We want men of power. The world is getting sick and rotten.

We want some men who are free and brave. Where are the heroes who trampled us down in the gorgeous youth of the world?

Smith. Your views do not differ materially from those of Edwinston, you know.

(Hofman had for some moments been pacing the room in his excitement, and he now brought himself up to within a foot of the table on which Smith is sitting, and shouted, "What?")

Smith. Don't realise your voice like that, Hofman, or I shall fall off the table. My point is this. Both of you approve of virtue. But while Edwinston considers many qualities to be virtues, you only approve of Strength and Truthfulness, and I think your Overman will have to give up many things that mortals enjoy, such as Friendship and Love.

Hofman. But a man may be realising himself in friendship and love.

Smith. Not if self-realisation means anything at all. I can understand how a man in pursuit of the ideals of power and self-realisation may consider it advisable to

understand his fellow-men and converse with them, but it is an obvious truth that friendship, love, and affection are bound to imply a subordination of oneself to others. Moreover, if life in a civilised state is to be tolerable, it entails considerable suppression of the natural man. But perhaps you would say that we realise ourselves by fitting ourselves to circumstances. I confess the term "self-realisation" seems to me to be a little vague.

At all events, neither of you, I fear, seem to take kindly to my notion of educating people so that they may be happy. Now, Edwinson, what people would you consider to be most happy?

(Edwinson rose slowly and went to the window. Below on the opposite side of the street a little crowd was waiting patiently and cheerfully for the doors of a cinematograph show to open. He pointed to the young workmen thronging down there with their wives on their arms and children dangling at their coats, and said:)

Edwinson. Those people, if they have good

health and no aspirations, are probably as happy as any one in the world. Prosperous City men verging on middle age are, I expect, quite happy also. It is reserved for the sensitive men, for those whose fibre is weakened by learning and culture, to feel most deeply the misery of the world. It is education that makes a Leopardi bitter or drives a Baudelaire mad.

Smith. To look at you and hear you speak, Edwinston, I should hardly believe that you had led a happy life. Yet do you really wish that your lot had been different? Do you yearn for the life of those poor men below? Would you really be content to plough fields or push barrows?

Edwinston. No. Although in moments of depression I yearn for the happy, thoughtless existence of the ignorant, I would not really abandon my little knowledge: it is too precious to me, and I would not barter it against animal happiness. In knowledge, as in civilisation, the further we advance the greater are our joys, the deeper our sorrows: but we cannot retreat.

Smith. I am glad to hear you say so. Your words will help me to explain the type I

desire to form, and they give me some hope that you will not hopelessly dissent from the views I am now going to express.

Edwinson. Now let all profane tongues be silent, and let us hear and dispute the description of an ideal man.

Smith. First, I admit that the term happy man embraces but little of our idea of a good man, of the man whom we would admire and love to own as a friend. Yet happiness (I would remark in passing), even of the lowest type, is something of a social virtue: it is pervasive and infectious, and therefore in a certain sense altruistic. I think we should most of us take more delight in the friendship of Rabelais than in that of Leopardi or Baudelaire—although, by the way, it was not only sensibility and intelligence but also incessant ill-health that made those two great men unhappy. Granted that we want our pupils to be cheerful, we must fit them for their station in life: we must train their physical health with the greatest care, and we must enable them to perform the ordinary social duties of their station and to earn a comfortable livelihood.

aim

And yet we know well that some of the boys

whom we are going to teach will not be contented with this even while they are young. Man entertains fantastic, inexplicable desires after things profitless—after truth, knowledge, and beauty viewed as ends in themselves. Some even yearn for absolute Chastity or absolute Holiness. These latter two desires are spiritual, not mental; exceptional, not rational: and since it has so often been observed that holy men have an antipathy to the use of human reason, we cannot undertake to train our boys in holiness—for our business is with thought. To my mind a passion for beautiful things is the possession of the wise and thoughtful; or at least is only of value to the intelligent: I cannot now argue this philosophy: I can only appeal to the vivid and trained understanding of those men who have loved the beautiful. Therefore, since our concern is with mental aspirations, and since we must accept it as a fact that men do long to understand the problems of reason, to master the details of science, and to appreciate beautiful things, and that we in fact admire and love the men who hold these strange desires—we will lay down that a fuller education be given in our

schools to those who are fitted to receive it. Our scholars who taste of the bitter-sweet fruit of this tree of knowledge will be made both more happy and more miserable. But observe, though we educate them for the sake of that greater happiness to which they will attain, yet we are not deluded into thinking that the young man who is athirst for knowledge is athirst for happiness. Some happiness it may give him, but that is only by the way. Foolish and irritating are those who contend, "This man gives his money to the poor because it is his form of pleasure; my form of pleasure is to expend it on the race-course: there is no moral difference between us!" If a man prefers to be generous, it is just this preference of his that makes us call him a good man: and we call him good not really in accordance with any fixed moral code, but from the nature of ourselves, which is to admire strong will, strong intellect, and strong love in our fellow-men.

Hofman. But supposing some people, as some do, admire Charles Peace the burglar extremely, and others think him an outrageous scoundrel?

Smith. The difference here and in all cases

aim? only
a means to
an end

Good

is not one of the natural faculties of admiration, but of analysis of the case. One man admires in Peace his strength of will, his intellect, his energy; another detests his lack of love. To admire energy and to hate cruelty is universal. But are you now agreed that the formation of some such type as I have described is a worthy aim for education?

Edwinson. You have made clear to me ideas that I felt for myself, but could not clearly define or express.

Hofman. And I am most marvellously persuaded.

After this the conversation became much less serious, and I grieve to state that Hofman began to feel a strange inclination to dance and sing. So they wore him out by taking him a very long walk round the city: and then Smith left them, but not without a solemn promise that he would meet them early on the morrow.

PHYSICAL TRAINING

CHAPTER III

PHYSICAL TRAINING

HAROLD SMITH met the two schoolmasters, as arranged, comparatively early the next morning at a café. He found them ruefully consuming thin coffee and thick rolls, and pining for the fleshpots and teapots of England. He laughed at their dejected countenances and gleefully produced from his pocket a fine pot of jam, which he good-naturedly shared with the forlorn travellers. The little party became most amicable, and as it was a fine fresh morning they resolved to make an expedition into the country. Their plans grew gradually more extensive and ambitious, till finally they decided to quit Bologna with no baggage but knapsacks, and to return thither only after some days of pedestrian exploration beyond the Apennines. They therefore took the train for a few miles so as to get on the foot of the mountains, alighted at an insignificant station

on the line to Florence and walked along the pass as far as Bagni di Poretta, where they took rooms for the night and dined handsomely. Over coffee and cigars Hofman became expansive, and glowed as ruddy as his beard with delight. "What a day, what a walk!" he cried; "I feel quite young again. Smith, you're making new men of us poor schoolmasters. I wish you didn't walk at such a pace though. I should never have thought you were such an athlete to look at you."

Edwinson. It has been a fine excursion indeed. Enough exercise to make us comfortably tired, not enough to exhaust or take away the appetite. I'm feeling wide awake: if you people are willing, let's go on talking about education.

Hofman. I should love to if it doesn't bore Smith, for I want to hear more wisdom from the mouth of that wise young man. It strikes me as odd, you know, Edwinson, that at school we never said a word either to each other or to any one else about the general principles and aims of education. We used, of course, to get quite excited about new or peculiar methods of pumping in knowledge,

but we never really considered where—well, where——

Smith. Where you were going to drive to when you'd got the tyres tight—if I may adopt your own cheery metaphorical style, Hofman?

Edwinson. And whither shall we drive to-night, O charioteer?

Smith. Straight on. In the distance our road may be obscure, but we shall have no immediate difficulty in finding our way. For we are at least certain of to-night's destination. Physical training we must discuss: and here all sane men are with us in our efforts to discover how to preserve, maintain, and encourage health in our pupils. However, since we are not doctors, we must, I fear, confine ourselves to generalities.

Now health, I think, should be, they say, not merely a harmony after the Platonic style, but positive and exuberant——

Edwinson. Won't that tend to some rather depressing forms of heartiness? I don't like people who slap one on the back and poke one in the ribs.

Smith. I don't much mind the type, especially among boys. It only means that the

intellect of your hearty man is not as well trained as his body, or that the aggressor has not enough natural outlet for the exercise of his vivid animal strength. Or it may be that he has not learnt manners. And the hearty only offend those who are feeling weak and depressed. In this mountain air, my dear Edwinson, you are getting quite hearty yourself, and I confidently expect to see you playing leap-frog with Hofman tomorrow all the way down to Pistoia.

Hofman (with an air of raising the tone of the conversation and suggesting a good theory for contentious debate). All schools should be on heights. It is curious that altitude should not only invigorate the body but elevate the mind.

Smith. Height is not very necessary, Hofman, and has become a mania with some people who seem to imagine that the Spartans exposed their babies on the peak of Taygetus in order to improve their health. Pure air is what a school needs, but this pure air is of little use unless we breathe it all night long. All our boys will sleep in the open air, with just enough shelter to protect them from rain. Colds will be a thing of the past: the

“general health” of the school will improve beyond belief: and not a school in England has the courage to do it.

Let us now build our beautiful school on the hills of imagination, and let us build it on the south coast of England. For I have a great faith in sunshine and sea.

Hofman. Down in Hampshire there is a little village beside a great warm bay which I loved best of all places when I was a boy. Eastward a long wonderful spit of hard and shell-strewn sand divides the bay from the all-but-lake of a harbour; westward rise white cliffs through which the tunnelling agents of the world have delved unknown and secret caves, or carved striding hollow rocks such as Turner drew in his Polyphemus, islanded out to sea. On land you have a little level strip near the sea for playing fields and a little shaven down on which to build the school in all its pride; and near by are moors, yellow in spring and red in autumn, to keep our fancies young.

Smith. I know your unnamed bay and its gentle scenery. Let us build there the school of our dreams, and one day perhaps we will

build on that shaven down a school in substance and reality. For dreams have been realised before now, my friend: even schoolmasters' dreams. Or have you never heard of La Giocosa and the fair name of that great humanist, Vittorino da Feltre, and how he taught his Mantuans the rhythm of body and mind, and was loved by them as few schoolmasters have been loved before or since those bright Renaissance days? Yet even in our imaginations and schemes let us be honourably fearless, bold and practical, and imagine not, like the bad poet, a golden and misty dream, but like the good poet, a strong and stirring reality. And since we must construct the shape before we infuse the spirit, let us first consider our portals and windows. In what style shall our architect build?

Edwinson. Shall he build in splendid Gothic, to match our old schools and cathedrals of England?

Smith. I hope not. Revived Gothic has produced no single good building in England, nor are ill-lighted vaults suitable for a school. We will have nothing to do with renewals of old styles; we will not build

after the Greek fashion, or the Græco-Roman, or the Full Roman, or Byzantine, or the Moorish, or the Perpendicular, or the Jacobean, or the Gothic, or the Ruskin-Gothic. Our style must be as new as our school. We will not oblige ourselves to build in stone because stone is symbolic, nor in brick because brick is so lowly and Hebraic. We shall build for comfort and utility, and obtain our beauty not from the added ornamentation of an antique style, but from the principles of symmetry and design. Indeed, I imagine we shall build our school after the American manner with iron and reinforced concrete. Of all methods of construction this is the strongest, for the San Francisco earthquake itself could not shake down the tallest and slimmest buildings wrought of this material. Therefore we shall build our school with straight and simple harmonious lines; and in so doing we may perhaps be advancing into a new architectural style, some day to be reckoned great and in its turn worthy of imitation.

Edwinson. I feel it would be very horrible to copy anything American, and the idea of this shed arrangement of yours chills me.

Won't it look rather like a powder magazine, with its great bare white walls?

Smith. Who said we were going to have bare white walls? The delight and joy of my building will be in fresco and statuary, not in pointed windows, mullions, and leaded panes. On the outside the school shall be a blaze of colours—and if frescoes fade even in the South of England so much the better for the artists of future generations, who will have to come and paint us new ones. Why, we will get the greatest pointillist artist alive to do our frescoes, for those sunlight effects of his that can never be seen at a proper distance in galleries will be grand in the open air. But it would be out of place to consider these details now: we must attack the problem of health and waiving romance, consider our building from the sanitary point of view. That simplicity of construction which we have chosen will surely go far to solve the problems of hygiene. Easy ventilation, no corners for dirt, central heating, mechanical dust extraction, desks arranged so that the light comes over the boys' left shoulders, electric light with shaded globes, no carpets, mouldings, fire-grates, but a few

easily beaten mats and running water in every bedroom, these things will be obvious necessities to so modern an architect as ours and we need say no more about them. We must have also a sanatorium under the direct management of a resident doctor. Strange it is, though, that any school which has the impertinence to ask over a hundred pounds a year for training and keeping boys as boarders should be destitute of these advantages.

Hofman. But we have not yet entered directly into the subject of physical training. Is there really any necessity to do so? I should have thought that we overdo it if anything in our English schools.

Smith. Our system of games—and, considering all things, what a splended system it is!—is quite unique. Do not laugh at me, Hofman, I mean something more than a platitude. Nowhere abroad, unless we count America, can it be paralleled. On the whole, it makes for the happiness of boys. Compare the merry and confident aspect of our English youth with the miserable, pinched, prematurely earnest appearance of continental children. Think of the lives of German schoolboys, embittered by the deadly

gymnastics, the huge classes, the incessant cram, the perpetual and ruinous horror of the final examination. Think of the ghastly statistics of child suicide in Prussia. Is it not this appalling system that is making the modern German so different a man from the old—is making him the great brutalising force of the world? How glorious is England in comparison! Perhaps indeed our discussion is futile: did all public schools give such a mental education as the most intelligent boys receive at Winchester and Eton, it would seem rash and Utopian to expect still finer things of English education, for the physical part of it is so invariably excellent. But still, if there be little room for improvement, so much the easier to fill up the space. And after all, our system of games and sports has become very perverted.

My great objection is that we have so little variety in our games. Cricket, for instance, is usually the sole diversion of a boy's summer term, except in the case of the three or four schools which practice rowing. There is no better game (we have heard this perhaps a little too often) for encouraging adroitness of hand and quickness of eye; but it is of no

more use in the formation of bodily vigour and beauty than any other outdoor, not sedentary, occupation. Now cricket is a pastime which only the proficient can possibly enjoy: that is to say, it is a game fit for about half the school. What happens to the other boys in the long summer afternoons? Are they allowed to take such exercise as they please, to walk, bicycle, or play tennis? Very rarely. Is there any school in Britain where boys are taught those two superb, manly, and most British exercises—the riding of a horse and the sailing of a ship? Is then the only reasonable alternative enforced? Are the boys who dislike cricket and are incompetent at it taught the game with special care, and helped to take their part by diligent individual instruction, like boys who are backward in their work? No, not anywhere in the kingdom. What happens in most large schools is that there are special games made up of athletic dullards who are set three times a week or more to play out amongst each other the weariest, the most melancholy of farces, captained by some unathletic, ineffectual classical scholar. For five hours the diverting sport continues, interrupted by a

roll call which ensures that no reprobate shall have shirked this noble duty for a little aimless wandering among woods and hills. Only too well do these incompetent and despicable boys (none of them I am sure of the stuff which has made England what she is) know the emptiness of waiting, the interminable dullness of fielding, the too brief joy of batting. Thus trained to perceive the inner charm of cricket, what a welcome change, what an instructive education, to spend from time to time a whole sun-bright afternoon watching, by compulsion, school matches.

The trouble in England is that we have never taken games seriously enough. We look upon them as a spectacle or show on a level with the music hall and the variety entertainment. How else could we endure the existence of professionals? In true sport no professionalism could ever be admitted: but as the thing is a show, why the professionals make it a better show. Let us have professionals to instruct our boys and to roll the pitch: for what other reason an intelligent English sportsman should desire their existence I cannot tell.

If we really consider the matter, we have

never treated athletics as a vital part of our national physical training. We are always intent upon the show games. We forget that it is infinitely more important that boys should enjoy themselves in some healthy way really suited to their natures than that they should become adepts in cricket or football.

Hofman. Cricket and similar games do, I suppose, train character, and there is a legend that they train boys in unselfishness, although I have not particularly remarked that school athletes are of a sweet, unselfish, retiring disposition. But I must say I do not consider cricket an ideal way of spending the afternoon even for the proficient cricketers. It is played in the open air, but it is not part of the outdoor life as I understand it.

Smith. What do you mean by the outdoor life?

Hofman. I suppose I am thinking of my favourite pupils who spend the afternoon with me exploring old quarries in the search of fossils, or grubbing in ditches for rare plants, or tracking birds and beasts with infinite stealth to their lairs, not to destroy but to observe. I look at them, tired,

healthy, happy, and voracious, returning from a long tramp. Would that afternoon have been better spent even in the most brilliant cricket? The fact is, it's so much less trouble to make all boys play one game and stick to one occupation. I rather think it's a neglect of duty on the part of their teachers.

Smith. You are right as far as you go, Hofman. I think it is clear that we must have more variety in our games and occupations. Even pure athletics, such as running and swimming, are rather neglected: there are a thousand other games little played in schools yet not contemptible and not unsuitable for boys—fives, golf, tennis, lacrosse. What boy even learns to punt, or is seriously taught to drive a motor? Edwinson will doubtlessly tell us that football and especially cricket are very beautiful, picturesque games, very traditional and fine. But we are concerned with English physique, which is more important than English cricket, and to improve this physique we must subject our weak or ill-formed boys to special training. Men who play cricket well may be round-shouldered, men who row well may over-develop them-

selves on one side, and, according to a well-substantiated legend, if they row too well they die young. Gymnasts tend to assimilate to the Eugene Sandow type, to become of dwarfed and monstrous appearance, with exaggerated muscles standing out in knobs all over their bodies. Rather, then, my dear Edwinson, we will revert to the *μηδεν ἀγαν* of your beloved Greeks: we will be mindful of the types of Polycleitus. To do this we must give a special, not a general, gymnastic training: we must take our athletics more seriously, and spend more trouble over them. We will not permit boys to stand in platoons and swing bars up and down; we will not be delighted to watch them promiscuously scrambling over the horse and up the ladder; we will not let them grow into short and hideous gymnasts, but we will, with the aid of medical wisdom and specialised gymnastics, cure round shoulders, narrow chests, and spindle arms: and I think we shall be rewarded for our pains.

Hofman. Would you not teach them also something about the laws of health and the structure of the human body?

Smith. The older boys and those who are going to be doctors or artists may learn all they like. How to bandage a wound, how to save life, what to take for a cold every one should know. But we must be very careful, or we may give them that little knowledge which is so dangerous; they will either not say when they are ill and try to cure themselves, or whenever they have a pain in the back they will come trembling to us and announce that they have Bright's disease.

Hofman. Then about hours of work, holidays, and so forth, are you contented with the present-day system? I think it is an important question.

Smith. There seems little to suggest. There should be far less preparation of work in evenings, far more direct plunging into a new subject in class. There should never be any work before breakfast at all, but boys might get up earlier than they usually do—at about 6.30 in summer, bathe, and have breakfast at once; while in winter they need not rise till about 8 o'clock. The youngest boys, however, ought not to get up as early as suggested in summer or their day will be too long. There should be two half-holidays

a week in the winter terms with a short and interesting hour's work in the late afternoon, but three full half-holidays a week in summer; and every opportunity should be given to boys for spending their Sundays in excursions over the country side, for the attendant evils of these excursions—the irate farmer whose horse has been ridden round a field, the boy with the catapult, the boy who goes into a public house to be grand and drinks a mug of beer, and the dog who surreptitiously buys Black Dog cigarettes—are not very terrible after all, and the attendant advantages are too great to be missed.

Hofman. We shall not, I hope, maintain discipline with the rod?

Smith. We shall, Hofman. There is, I admit, a certain peril of the flagellant vices. But we must run so inconsiderable a risk for the sake of considerable advantages. At any rate we shall not lend ourselves to the vulgar opinion of those sentimentalists who consider it degrading to endure physical pain, and laying a practically obscene stress on the torments of physical discomfort pathetically invite us to use moral suasion. Punishment is absolutely necessary in a large school. It

must be proportionable to the offence, and the only two possible punishments that are so proportionable are detention and caning. In the hours of detention we should insist that a boy be occupied in some form of hard but profitable work: malicious penalties, such as the assignment of "lines," we shall esteem beneath us. Boys would usually themselves prefer to be dealt with quickly and summarily, and it is very possible we shall give them the choice of treatment when we can. Most head-masters nowadays are extremely careful not to touch particularly delicate and nervous boys, and the days when floggings in school were a real and serious evil ceased with the death of that head-master, often called great, who made his school famous as the place "where they flogged the boys so." When we punish boys we shall, I fear, have to lecture them a little; they must be aware of our displeasure, particularly if the offence is of a mean or underhand kind; they must be clearly shown that they have done the sort of thing the best boys do not do. On the other hand, if they are caught smoking, or arraigned for juvenile clamour, we will not weep over the enormity

of the offence, but deal with it succinctly. I may be wrong in this: to tell you the truth, I consider the sentimentalist more poisonous than the flagellant.

Edwinson. We have perhaps left the most difficult problem untouched.

Smith (cheerfully). Oh, the sex problem: there is no difficulty about that. Or if there is it lies in the sentimental obtuseness of the public. Wells has settled the matter for ever by suggesting a book on the subject; and such a book every boy in the school shall possess. It must contain the exact truth without exaggerating dangers or threatening hell. It must clearly state that the popular prejudices are against certain things, without agreeing or disagreeing with those prejudices. It will clearly add that, for the school's sake, any immorality discovered will be severely and corporally punished. We can avoid in our open-air system as well as in any other those pernicious partitioned dormitories, which so obviously foster vice. We shall not expel boys; and we shall not, like the conventional head-master, pretend to faint with horror when we discover others acting as we might perhaps with a little temptation have

acted ourselves, had we ever been members of so monastic an establishment as a public school.

Edwinson. The chapel is perhaps a help.

Smith. Emotional purity in the young is to my mind an insidious form of indecency. It is laying too much stress on things. The normal boy troubles as little about the matter as possible: and he is perfectly and entirely right.

So saying Smith seemed to think he had exhausted the question, for he changed the subject a little abruptly and began to criticise the poetry of Browning.

TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHAPTER IV

TECHNICAL TRAINING

THE three friends were at Pistoia.

They had arrived a little after noon, and had spent an hour or two already in observation, and were entranced that this little town should be a treasure mine of beauty, and contain more fair and noble creations than three English counties. For in it are many large churches of white marble striped with black, fascinating the curious. And there is a pleasant Duomo and a noble baptistery. And a superb pulpit by him of Pisa who first learnt from unearthed Greek marbles that even stone men may move and be divine. And very old curious reliefs by Gruamons and Adodat, who did not know this. And, above all, there is the finest work of the Della Robbias, that frieze on the Ospedale, where in bright-coloured relief are sweetly represented the seven Works of Mercy. Thus it was that, possessed by that peace and large-

ness of the spirit that comes to those who have lovingly contemplated works of beauty and structures of delight, they sat down in the evening in a little café in a side street and, just as the last rays of sunset were leaning across the plain to kiss the Apennines, earnestly re-opened their discussion.

Hofman. As far as I can remember what you said at Bologna, we must now deal with technical training, that is, with instruction given in order to enable our boys to earn their livings. It seems we must either give a few general ideas or enter into a mass of detail and suggest what is necessary for each profession or trade.

Edwinson. Trade? I presumed we were reforming the ordinary English public school. Are we going to reform board-school education as well?

Smith. We cannot talk about a select school while we are considering ideals of education.

Edwinson. But we cannot under any conceivable circumstances educate together our diplomats and our shoeblacks.

Smith. Which would be injured most if we

did, I wonder: our diplomats or our shoeblacks?

Edwinson. It would only vulgarise our diplomats and make our shoeblacks discontented.

Smith. Then you consider that discontent in a shoeblack is not divine, and that the quality of a gentleman is skin deep? Never mind, Edwinson. You believe in aristocracy, and so do I. You hate vulgarity of manners; I dislike it also, but not as much as I dislike vulgarity of mind. If I do not hold your belief in the British aristocracy of to-day it is because I find that most of them, except those few who are actively engaged in state service, are both vacuous and vulgar. You may know them better than I do, but, as far as I can judge, their views on art and life are as vulgar as their taste in amusement and their attitudes in motor cars. Our philosophers and artists find little of the encouragement from them which they would have infallibly obtained two hundred years ago: they have been forced to take sides with democracy. Some day perhaps our men of sense and wisdom will form a party to themselves and wrest the reins of government from demagogues and quacks. But you

know well enough that our best and most venerable public schools contain numbers of boys whose grandfathers were, shall we say, shoeblacks, and that some of these boys are tolerable and some the reverse, because some have minds and some have not. It is education that refines and mental quiescence that degrades. We will have no deformed natures in our school; but we will teach all who are capable of receiving instruction how to talk pleasant English and to behave prettily. Phonetics will help us. And any poor boy of mean birth who shows himself worthy of the higher education shall receive it. We will make a scheme to help them out of the school funds, partly by giving scholarships, partly by lending them money to be repaid when they are in secure positions, earning a fair income. If a duke's son, on the other hand, shows himself incapable of learning manners, he shall either learn the trade for which he is fitted or leave us.

Edwinson. I am afraid the dukes will not send their sons to us.

Smith. Then we will hope to have the sons of north country artisans: the class has begun to think independently and to delight

in reading, and they are the best class of men in England. But to return to our technical training. Not only is it impossible to talk about separate trade details, but also impossible to build the small town which we would require if we were going to teach a number of trades. A boy will have to leave school early if he wants to specialise in book-binding or horse training. So we will talk first of all of those things which will be useful to all boys throughout life, and beginning at the beginning we must consider reading and writing. We must teach them spelling rationally and by derivation——

Edwinson. But if they know no Latin?

Smith. A boy can learn that *medius* means middle without spending years at Cicero and Horace. You can tell a boy that the word we pronounce fewsha is connected with the German for a fox even if he hasn't read and could not read the second part of *Faust*. And I don't much mind about spelling when all is said and done: it is matter of a special faculty of observation, and a man may be a splendid engineer and write "parallel" with an "l" too few. That boys ought to learn to read beautifully is a fact so obvious that it

has been universally forgotten: our young men are a tribe of mumblers. But it is about writing that I have very definite suggestions to make. I am convinced of the futility of copy-books, double-lined paper, and all other aids to calligraphy. I am persuaded that it is absurd to worry about the writing of a child of ten: I am also persuaded that it is very important to worry about the writing of a boy of fifteen. To teach beauty of writing is perhaps impossible; the beauty of a writing lies in its character, and nothing is more revolting than a copper-plate fist. But we can teach legibility, and even speed.

Then we should consider arithmetic. But, Hofman, you know more about that than I do.

Hofman. I think I can point out to you a serious mistake which modern educationalists make. They want little boys to be so intelligent. They yearn to show them the reason of things. They would like them to work out for themselves the theory of subtraction, and they revel in a horribly complicated system of shortened division. It is so much easier for a small boy to learn things by rule. Let the problems of numbers come when he has learnt his tables, and can add up money,

and has mastered the fair twin systems of fractions.

Smith. Yes, Hofman, and do you think we need worry them with any but the most important of our horrible weights and measures? Might we not keep hidden from them the mysteries of pecks, scruples, and bushels till they come actually to need them, and abolish discount sums, stock and share sums, compound interest sums till the days when they have more than fourpence a week to spend on speculation. Shall we not tire of papering rectangular rooms with square windows? But since we are going to have workshops they will be able to take a practical interest in many of these things. The measuring of the wood and the calculation of its price will not in our school be left to the carpenter, and the misfits of home-made cupboard doors will give them sound lessons in practical geometry.

Edwinson. We have now mentioned reading, writing, and arithmetic. Will our hopelessly stupid people, our bricklayers and bootblacks, need anything more?

Smith. In the ideal state, as I conceive it, they would not. The government would

ensure that these limited individuals should live in comfort and cleanliness, and be paid in proportion to the simplicity of their occupations. In an ideal country, if any of them in after years found his intellect developing, and began to read books in our free libraries, he could at any time take the state examination and, by passing it, become entitled to a more profitable and less humdrum occupation.

Hofman. If schools like ours were established all over this ideal England, and if you were to give all boys a real chance, unskilled labour would become very dear.

Smith. Then we shall have to invent more machines to take the place of unskilled labour, my dear Hofman. But we do not live in an ideal England, but in a country where the stupidest boys may be the heirs to fortunes, for all we know, and where they all will certainly be entitled to votes. Let us then consider what might be done under existing circumstances. I think our plan will be this. We will wait till the boys are fifteen years old, and then we will take those who are deriving no benefit from their more advanced classes which they attend and put them in a class together, where we must endeavour to teach

them, if we can, the elementary rules of argument, and even show them that they need not believe a thing because it is printed and published. We shall perhaps be able to do this by means of examples of vicious argument and *petitiones principii* culled from the daily papers. Also they ought to know a little of the inner working of political events during the last twenty years, and we will read to them the best stories of English history to make them proud of their country. Also, if we are cynical, we will teach them the doctrines of Carlyle to make them proud of their work. And if a Plato arises to turn political economy into something at once simple and profound, we will teach them that. We shall fail perhaps to make any impression on these unfortunates, but we shall not have been guilty of neglect.

Hofman. But the difficulty is that we cannot really divide our school up into sheep and goats, or wise and foolish, even by examination. We are going to have in our school boys of a hundred different grades of intelligence, a hundred different aptitudes.

Smith. And we shall have to grade our instruction accordingly. Our guardians, our

brilliant boys, our φύλακες, will learn everything they can. But obviously our doctors will have more of the instruction we give to our φύλακες than our bakers or butchers. All that is a mere matter of detail.

Hofman. Ah, had you ever been a schoolmaster, Smith, you would not prattle so merrily about matters of detail. We have not yet said a word about the higher education: but look at the mess in which we are already involved. Boys who are going to be bootblacks will be attending the bottom class in political economy; boys in the top class of political economy will be attending the lowest class in bootblacking. It seems your rule is simply this, that we are going to teach everybody everything they can learn.

Smith. Not such a bad ideal either, Hofman, but the picture you draw is perverse and unjust. However, I think it would be better to put a little order into the apparent chaos in this way. We are going to draw a sharp dividing line in our table of school hours. The morning will be spent entirely in teaching boys things that will help them to earn their money. The morning will be devoted to workshops, bookkeeping, shorthand, all

work of any sort that is done with the object of passing examinations, not excluding that specialised training in writing Greek and Latin poetry which enables a man to gain scholarships and earn his living as a don. Of course it will be hard to arrange, for boys may be going to earn money in a thousand different ways; but we have pointed out that very few of the more specialised sorts of technical training can be given in school. It comes to little more than saying that the ordinary school work done on the scientific or modern side of an up-to-date school day will be compressed into the morning, with the huge advantage that we are neither going to worry our scientist with Greek irregular verbs nor our architects with chemistry from the moment when the boy or his parents or we ourselves, judging from the boy's preferences and character, have decided what profession he is to follow. Before the age of fifteen, by which time he ought to have made up his mind, a boy will be given his chance of working at various studies and occupations to test his capacity or preference.

The afternoon we shall employ in real education—but Florence is the place where

we will talk of that, nor could I imagine a better scene for so high a discussion.

Edwinson. It is a pity we cannot connect Pistoia too with our technical training, since Florence will be so suitable, and we connected Bologna with the inaugural discussion and the mountain heights with physical accomplishments.

Smith. Well, Pistoia used to be a great manufacturing town in the old days. It was the birthplace of pistols: hence its name.

Hofman. See Baedeker.

THE GRECIANS OR TRUE
EDUCATION

CHAPTER V

THE GRECIANS OR TRUE EDUCATION

THE melodious name of Florence calls up such delightful and extravagant memories that many wayfarers who have the love of books and pictures in their souls have been disappointed with the austere appearance of the city, with her narrow yet straight and gloomy streets, her huge rectangular palaces, her vast and unsatisfying cathedral. But if on a summer afternoon a man should ascend, as our friends ascended, the hill of Fiesole he would see from that famous eminence the City of Flowers wonderfully set among her gardens and villas, and he would appreciate that tremendous dome which rises high above the plain of Arno, like some fabled antique omphalos of the world, and he might cry, perverting to himself that gentle ballad of old:—

Where will you bury me? In Saint Mary of the Flower.
Wherewith will you cover me? With violets and roses.

They sat on the terrace of a little inn gazing at the prospect in the glorious light of afternoon, for they had already stretched forth their hands over the dainties and eaten and drunk in abundance. It had been arranged that they should not discuss what Smith called true education, but that he should write down for them his thoughts on the subject in connected form. And this he had done.

“Do let us hear you read now, Harold,” said Edwinson.

The young man took a sheaf of paper out of his pocket and quietly began.

“I require that those who listen to my words should hold one faith with me. They must believe with me in the value of human reason; they must love beautiful things and consider them important; they must be enthusiastic for their fellow-men. They must believe that it is possible to learn, and even that it is possible to teach. Otherwise my words will be vain and convey neither meaning nor persuasion.

“I have to realise that I have little new to say. I, like Plato, desire to create φύλακες. If we really understand that golden book of

the *Republic*, such a type of the classic in its form, so strangely modern in its theory, so simple and so subtle, we shall perhaps think that no more need be said, and that by close following of its precepts we may be able to create *φύλακες* in modern England. We must realise that in attacking poetry as a means of education Plato is merely attacking under a decent veil the popular religion of which Homer was the Bible; we must be perpetually on the watch for Plato's quiet humour: and then the *Republic* becomes for us in practical matters a wise and attractive guide. Yet we have to adapt Plato's theories to the modern world, and that is what I shall now attempt: forgive me, then, if I become dull, prosaic, and detailed in my ardour for common sense. I have not prepared a surprise for you; I am not going to expound any startling or novel theory; I am not going to suggest a short cut to perfection, but I am going to trace out in detail a course of education which I hope will appeal to the thoughtful as possible, desirable, and sufficient.

“I must suppose, moreover, for my purposes, that the school which is to rise on that

bright English bay of ours will somewhat partake of the nature of a university. I must have at least five years of a boy's intelligent life. For the education I intend to give to those who are fit to receive it (whom I intend henceforward to call Grecians, borrowing a delightful term from the traditions of Christ's Hospital) is very universal and very difficult. Keeping clear before me all the danger I run of turning my pupils into dilettanti, I am going to teach them to be as far as possible universal in their comprehension and admiration of the mysteries and beauties of life. Our Grecians when they leave us will have seen, as it were from a height suddenly, the whole world of knowledge stretching out in rich plains and untraversed seas.

"Let me at this point lay down very clearly who these Grecians of mine will be. I intend education to be given in the complete form which I am going to describe to those boys in the school who have the best and most refined intelligence. In an ideal state these boys would not have to earn their living: they would automatically become rulers of the state, or else be subsidised to live in

leisure as artists or critics. In our actual England we can give this complete education only to the sons of the rich, and to those few boys which our school funds enable us to support, not only here, but afterwards. To give a boy this complete education we must keep him till he is at least twenty-one. In England of the present day he would find himself at that age well prepared to take, after another year's special work, such an examination as that admitting to the Indian Civil Service. I mention this because it may show that some parents might risk leaving their sons with us to receive a useless and fine education and yet hope that boys so educated might subsequently earn their livings even in the existing state of society. But the whole virtue and beauty of true education must depend on its absolute isolation from the prying influence of the state or university. I do not mean by this that we shall object to examinations as such, but will have nothing to do with examinations which lead us out of our chosen path. Our only examinations will be the school examinations. By examining boys and by no other method shall we admit them to our

select company; by examining we will assign to them their rank in the school. I have little patience with those who abuse examinations. An examiner may be stupid and set worthless papers; but provided the papers be well set, examination is the sole adequate test of a boy's capacity. For we have no sympathy with Cecil Rhodes, nor with the cheerful, popular, and chiefly ignorant crowds who come to Oxford under his fantastic testament: we do not like this democratic selection of the prize favourites: we pin our faith to a written and evident intellectual superiority. We mistrust the boy who is said to be 'very good at work really, but no use at exams.' Such a boy is either so morally deficient that he cannot rise to a crisis and concentrate his energy and ideas—and far be it from me to admit such a one to be a Grecian—or else it means that he is incapable of literary composition or self-expression; or else that his thoughts and facts are so confused that he cannot write them down. There is a great deal wrong with boys who fail at examinations. Furthermore, I believe in prizes; I refuse to expect the young, however intelligent they may be,

and however delightful they may find their studies, to show that single-hearted devotion to work which we demand of the research scholar or the specialist.

“How, then, shall we select those boys who are to be given this most full education? Entirely from those who are most proficient in the afternoon work. What I am going to discuss now is the education that the highest form in the school will receive. Boys who arrive at this high standard will be, where possible, exempt from the technical training accorded to others: they will devote morning and afternoon to the culture of the mind. Now all boys in the school will be compelled to take part in this afternoon work, be they stupid or clever, old or young. The more intelligent they are the more their profession will have to suit itself to their education. But we have not thought it worth while to do more than suggest, by references here and there, what the afternoon education will mean in early years. And if I have confused the ideal and real at times I think I may be excused, for it is in reality quite easy to perceive how far my ideal could be followed at the present day. But to make quite

clear what I actually intend I will trace the ordinary careers of Auberon, Arthur, Jack, Montague, Peter and Tom.

“Auberon is the son of a rich nobleman who has every faith in a humane education. He does not require his boy to prepare for any examinations, as he can get him a diplomatic or other post if the boy demands one. Auberon arrives at school between the ages of ten and twelve, knowing how to read, write and add. As he is under no necessity of learning a trade, or fitting himself for a professional examination, he spends the morning hours attending lessons in the Latin and French languages, which are being given to those boys who have to take examinations in the subject. He shines in the afternoon classes: he has a passion for reading plays, and is never weary of observing pictures. In after years he soon passes the examination which admits him into our Grecians, and follows their course of education, which will shortly be described, staying with us to the age of twenty-one.

“Arthur is little less gifted by nature than Auberon, but his father cannot support him in after life, and the school is not yet rich

enough to do so. He is allowed to attend all sorts of classes in the morning: at the age of fourteen he finds he prefers science to languages, and determines to become a doctor. At the same time he is admitted as a Grecian. He must still continue under the old system and work at science in the morning and receive his general education in the afternoon. It is obvious we can only teach him some of the things we teach to Auberon, so we choose for him the lightest and most amusing parts of general education, encourage him to read English and French, and to listen to music, of which he is very fond; and he accompanies us on those excursions into pure reason the nature of which we will hereafter explain; but we do not worry him with such difficult subjects as Latin and Greek. We hope he will be no worse a doctor and no less happy a man for having once taken interest in things quite outside his profession.

“Jack’s parents are very poor indeed; as a matter of fact they are grocers in a small way, living at Kensal Rise. Yet Jack also is one of our most charming and intelligent boys. We have given him a scholarship at

school, but we cannot, unfortunately, support him throughout life. We must assign him a profession, and we choose for him the profession of classical scholarship as being one of those in which a man may continue the pursuit of pure learning. He will obviously profit by the same Latin and Greek classes which Auberon and his fortunate companions attend in the mornings (these classes will be in the mornings, I say, for the sake of the many people like Arthur who are spending the morning in the professional work and have no time to spend on such a difficult subject as classical learning, but are ready to join their fellow Grecians in the afternoon). But Jack will not be with Auberon for more than the one morning hour which he devotes to classics. Instead of sharing his lectures on European history and art, he will be working at the writing of Greek and Latin compositions and unravelling the mysteries of classical philology and grammar. We never let him cram for his scholarship, yet he obtains it, which is very surprising.

“Montague is like Auberon, the son of a rich nobleman, but he has inherited from his family an almost ineradicable stupidity. He

brightens up a little, however, when we talk to him about railway engines and motor boats. We frankly tell the duke that we cannot give his son a good general education because he is incapable of profiting by it, but that we could turn him into a tolerable engineer. The angry peer takes his son away from us and sends him to Eton to learn the Latin genders after writing an indignant letter to *The Times* about our old English traditions and the value of gentlemen. Montague subsequently enters Parliament and becomes a prominent high churchman.

“Peter’s father is a decayed tradesman; and as Peter is not a very brilliant boy, and never becomes a Grecian, all he can hope for, unless we help him, is to become a decayed tradesman in his turn. Peter, however, is quite good at mathematics and longs to be a surveyor. If we can, we help him to become one, on the understanding that he will repay us in future days when he is earning a good income. Though we have made no contract with him, contracts with minors being invalid, Peter has old-fashioned notions about what is honourable, and repays us as soon as he is able.

“Tom’s father, never a rich man, dies, leaving nothing for Tom, who is a hopeless donkey. We do not cut Tom adrift, but procure for him a position on a ranch where his athletic prowess will stand him in good stead. Poor Tom!

“Having now suggested by these many examples more clearly, I think, than I could have done by pages of rules and explanations the sort of way in which various boys will be treated in our school, I will now pass on directly to explain that course of education which Auberon will follow and which will occupy both his mornings and his afternoons as soon as he has (perhaps at the age of fifteen) passed the examination which admits him a Grecian.

“In doing so I shall refer from time to time to the beginnings of this education—to the sort of study which occupied Auberon’s afternoons before he became a Grecian; but on the whole I think I may leave the details of his early education in the humanities to common sense.

“The first point I want to emphasise is that we intend to assign various importance to the various branches of knowledge, of which

I hold some to be of far greater value than others.

“First and above all things our guardians must be philosophers. The world needs men who think clearly, who consider facts in their just proportion to the universe, who are not carried away by winds of doctrine, who can laugh the laugh of knowledge at epoch-making thoughts from Buda - Pesth or at scientific excursions into Christian apologetics.

“Yet I do not think it will be necessary to weary any boy who has not a special love of philosophy with the details of the history of thought, or of the hundred systems of a hundred philosophers. Certain books indeed he must peruse to sharpen his critical faculties. But instead of worrying him with the monads of Leibniz or with the premature and cryptic utterances of Thales and Heraclitus, instead of expecting him to grasp the curious theories of Avicenna, Hutchinson, and Hobbes, we will teach him Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and some modern philosophies, not that he may believe, but that he may ponder; and at evening in the shady garden overlooking the sea the Grecians will as-

semble round their Socrates for earnest discussion. This will be no neo-pagan revival, but a real continuation of the work attempted in the Academy of Athens. Moreover, we will permit all manner of men to come and talk to our boys, since thus only can we prepare them for a life in the course of which they will hear so many conflicting doctrines. Pragmatists shall address them with urgent persuasion on their lips; parsons shall work on their tender emotions and threaten them with the wrath of God; veiled mystics of the East shall expound the Sufic ecstasy or the Buddhist Nirvana, or exhibit the results of that antique process, salvation through starvation, to their shuddering gaze. Are not our pupils φύλακες? Are they not Grecians? In the evening we will discuss quietly together the Pragmatist, the Parson, and the Hindu.

“But I am afraid a loud outcry will rise up against us from the virtuous of this world. ‘What about their morals? You are sapping their morals, unholy corrupters of youth! You deserve the hemlock. Insist on a religion for them, insist at least on the Kantian categorical imperative, unless you desire

your boys to re-enact the worst crimes of the house of Borgia.'

" But having a little moral shame ourselves we do not teach them creeds in which we do not believe in order to save ourselves trouble; and we refuse in our talks on philosophy to leave the categorical imperative uncriticised. We teach our boys to think about ethical problems, and a person not religiously inclined might even think it was more moral to think deeply about morality, and to take some trouble to form an individual code of ethics, than to take the whole matter on trust from parents or priests. And the result of our boldness will perhaps not be so very dreadful. Intelligent young men (as far as my university experience goes) are seldom bestial or outrageous in their desires, and, curious to relate, I have known hundreds of delightful people who have lived the most refined, elegant, and humane lives without the aid of religion or even of ethics.

" But the pure philosopher is not a sufficient ideal. We may find, we often do find, that such a man is wanting in several respects. In resolution, in power of command, in ability to deal with a crisis he may fail: but we must

confess that no mental education can form these high qualities. For them we must look to a boy's natural endowments, and perhaps to the physical training he receives; and to test them we must consider his influence with others. But we may also find a pure philosopher very deficient in his appreciation of the joy of life: and education can do something for him here. For the joy of life is not to be understood by the reading of Norwegian drama, but is the heritage of those who have unlocked the secret door that leads into the garden of the senses.

"Hateful to me are those ignorant and thoughtless people who say that taste has no rules and that art cannot be taught: never did a more pernicious heresy flourish. It is quite true that we cannot inspire the blind with a passion for Rembrandt, or cause the mentally deranged to read Shakespeare with delight. But one can always take an intelligent boy (I speak from experience) and teach him first of all the history of art; and in the next place one can teach him to read, look, or listen with observation and intelligence. During this time, while he is acquiring what we may call artistic experience, he

will have become vaguely appreciative. Now and only now is the time to instruct him in the principles of æsthetic law. For such law exists: it is not a mere matter of individual taste whether Velazquez be a better artist than Marcus Stone or not; or Milton greater than Keble and Vaughan. Velazquez *is* a better artist than Mr. Stone. The law is a complicated law, of course, but to consider its principles will be helpful; and it is refreshing for those who are bewildered by the disagreement of æsthetic experts to note that the greater knowledge those experts have, the more striking is their agreement in matters of appreciation.

“The three great arts I would place in this order of educational importance—literature, representation, music. I know there are some who consider music to be the purest and best of arts, because it requires for its comprehension no external intellectual effort, but makes a direct appeal to the emotions. The justice of this contention depends on our ideal of an art: that music has less *educational* importance than the two other sister arts becomes obvious if we admit the contention of those who make this lofty

claim for music. For the understanding of a picture we require our previous observation of tangible objects, perhaps an appreciation of the value and expression of human emotions, certainly a subtle sympathy with a period of the world's art, life, and manners. But it is literature which appeals especially to educators as being always a criticism of life, however incomplete we may feel that definition to be: through reading literature we enhance our delight in life.

“We must therefore give our boys the most complete literary training possible, not often worrying them by examinations and commentaries, nor ever dreaming to make them acquainted with all the great books of the world before the age of twenty-one. Instead we shall permit them to read in a pleasant library, and give them advice or organise competitions in special subjects from time to time. I see no reason why Grecians or any other boys should ever be allowed to read perfectly worthless tales of adventure and magazine stuff, except to find therein examples of bad style and stupidity. This I suggest in no puritan spirit, with the idea that tales of pure delight or adventure are in

themselves evil, but because England has produced Anthony Hope, Maurice Hewlett, Gilbert Chesterton among her minor writers of romance, not to mention those truly great narrators of splendid and exciting tales—Stevenson, Kipling, and Conrad. Of poetry also our boys must read the best. We will not give even our youngest boys inferior or so-called patriotic poetry to read, out of the false conception that such despicable stuff is specially suitable to a childish understanding. Yet though we will keep away from them the ‘May Queen,’ ‘Casabianca,’ and the ‘Battle of the Baltic,’ we will certainly enliven the interest of the young in verse by giving them to read such good stories as ‘Sohrab and Rustum,’ ‘Enid and Geraint,’ or the ‘White Ship.’ We shall teach them, moreover, that there are other beauties in poetry beyond metrical swing, and neither in reading English nor in reading classical verse shall boys, once the metre is mastered, ever be allowed to read to the obvious tramp of metre in a boarding-school sing-song style. It is so easy to make them read with more application of the refinements of poetic stress. Nor shall we fall into the opposite

error and let them imagine, like our great actors, that blank verse should be read like prose. But they shall read with dignity, slowly, with realisation of the beauty of each word, and of how in verse each word has its value, not only of sense, but of sound and association; they shall pause at the end of the lines and mark the metre subtly and not grossly: and all this may be taught to the wise.

“We will train our Grecians in the perception of different styles by giving them exercises to write in the varying styles of our English authors. We expect boys to write mock Cicero and Tacitus; why, in the name of common sense, can they not write mock Gibbon or Carlyle? Nor do I think for a minute that these exercises will hinder any from forming in later years an original style, but rather the reverse should happen, for boys so instructed will very clearly understand before they leave us that style is attained by scrupulous care and individuality of expression. In the same way we shall write English, not Greek or Latin, poetry, and, strange to say, we shall take these compositions more and not less seriously than

the classical verse is taken now. We shall not give a prize once a year for some absurd heroics on a set theme, but we shall very diligently teach the art of verse, initiating our boys by setting them to write verse translations from poems in other tongues. Our criticism will be ruthless: we shall point out vulgarity of idea, insufficiency of thought, staleness of metaphor, harshness of sound. We shall not necessarily produce great poets by this training, but we shall certainly produce young men who love poetry and (what is rarer still) who understand it. The artist may have an incomplete understanding of poetry; but only the artist can have a complete understanding of it.

“It is here that we must consider which dead or living tongues our guardians must know, for we shall consider at present the learning of a language merely as a means of reading a new literature. Latin and Greek are inevitable both from the intrinsic merit of their literature and from the force of the historical tradition which Edwinson once so fluently pointed out. But our teaching of these languages will be revolutionary except in the case of those boys who are taking them

as part of their technical training in order to win university scholarships. There will be no writing, and certainly (if Dr. Rouse will forgive us) no speaking, of Latin and Greek. We shall let such portions of the grammar as are not very important (genders and the parts of Latin verbs) be rather learnt in the course of reading than laboriously committed to memory. We shall read very quickly in class, and confine ourselves to works which are either good in themselves, historically interesting, or influential on subsequent thought. We shall divert the young with Homer, easiest of great poets, with Lucian's *Vera Historia*, with a few legends of old Rome from Livy, and with fairy tales from Apuleius. We will not weary even Grecians with Thucydides when he talks about dreary expeditions into Ætolia; but all Grecians shall read the fate of the Sicilian expedition and learn by heart the speech of Pericles. Into Demosthenes we will only dip; of Sophocles and Euripides we will select the finest plays and read them, as well as the Æschylean trilogy, more than once. Herodotus we shall read through lightly, as is fitting, and we shall take parts in the plays of

Aristophanes in merry congress; of Plato we shall never weary, for he is good for the soul. Nor shall we presume to forget Theocritus and the lyric fragments, or those unfading roses of the Anthology which tell how roses fade. And only for the very young shall we bowdlerise anything, since we are dealing, not with urchins, but with the select and chosen few.

“ In Latin we will trouble no reasonable soul with Plautus and Terence, or with more of Cicero than is needed to grasp the excellent style of that second-rate intellect. Of Ovid too, who is only interesting when immoral, we shall read, for the style's sake, some of the duller portions. To the claims of those deathless school-books, the *Æneid* of Virgil, the Odes of Horace, and the Satires of Juvenal, we shall submit, for their fame is deserved; Lucretius and Catullus are too obvious to mention; Tibullus is a sleepy fellow; and from Propertius we select. Tacitus tells us much history and is pleasant to read, nor are the letters of Pliny the Younger disagreeable; but Cæsar I would abandon to the historical specialist and Livy I would read in haste. Of Apuleius only one book is essentially

disagreeable: the rest is charming, and too long neglected.

“Now the total bulk of all that I have commended as readable in these two languages is not very large, and could easily be stowed away into some twenty well-printed volumes. As soon as the preliminaries are mastered we shall read through the classics for three hours a week for three years. No boy except the specialist shall begin Latin or Greek till he is fifteen years old: this will ensure, I think, that he does not waste about five years in learning grammar, but attacking a not very difficult subject at a riper age, will master it within a quarter of the time it would have taken him had he, after the usual school fashion, begun Latin at the age of nine and Greek at the age of eleven. He should therefore be ready at the age of sixteen for our three years’ classical course, and though we shall not spend anything like as much time over the classics as do other schools which are still hampered by the Renaissance and scholastic traditions, and by external examinations, I believe our boys will love the classics more and obtain a fuller understanding of the classical spirit than those to whom

Latin and Greek are a ceaseless drudgery and evil. I believe they will learn, no less than others have learnt, from these time-honoured studies that calm and even fervour of mind, that sane and serene love of beautiful things, that freedom from religious bigotry and extravagance which marks the writings of the Greeks, and that seriousness, decorum, and strength, that sense of arrangement and justice which marks the writings and still more the history of the Romans.

“We have now to consider in how many modern European tongues we are going to give universal instruction, not forgetting that our Grecians are going to have so much time to themselves, so many hours when they are simply to go into the library and read, that it will be easy for us to encourage and help any boy of linguistic ability who, discontented with what we can teach him, desires to enrich his knowledge of those languages he learns in school, or to attempt some rarer and more exciting tongue — Spanish, Swedish, Russian, or even Persian, fired perhaps by the eloquence of some literary specialist, whom we have invited to lecture at the school, and his translated

extracts. But I may surprise some if I say at the outset that I cannot consider that there is any but the slightest educational value in the actual acquisition of a modern language, in learning to speak it, read it, or write it, apart from the serious study of the literature, history, and traditions of a foreign people. Any German clerk, as Hofman remarked when he so briefly dismissed those who suggested that a good modern language education was a fine practical thing, any cosmopolitan or Swiss innkeeper, any half-breed dragoman can gabble six or seven tongues, and sometimes gabble them correctly; and the dreariest lady student from Russia can speak beautiful French and passable German, and yet not have in her head a single Russian, not to speak of a German or French, idea.

“Nevertheless, very fine is the spirit of the true linguist, which I admit to be a very different thing from the mere spirit of literary curiosity which desires to learn just enough of a language to read some favourite or famous author in the original. The true linguist revels in fantastic grammars where the verbs open out in the middle to make

themselves passive or negative, and numerals agree with singular masculine nouns in the genitive feminine plural. He delights in learning and in reproducing curious scripts whose mysterious systems of dots, segmented circles, or paintbrush strokes have charmed his eye. He revels in making obscure noises foreign to the English ear, and in planning out euphonic changes and philological laws. If we have a boy filled with this spirit among our Grecians we shall be delighted, we shall provide him with all manner of grammars and dictionaries, and persuade his parents to send him abroad for the summer holidays to perfect himself.

“ But we shall not have the time nor the inclination to devote such special attention to the three languages, French, German, and Italian, which we hope to teach regularly to all our Grecians. We shall learn to translate from these languages, and to pronounce them fairly correctly when we read them aloud. To attain this pronunciation we shall most certainly not employ the ridiculously complicated script of the International Phonetic Association, realising as we do that the only European language for the learning of which

the employment of a phonetic script is necessary is English: French, German, and Italian, at all events, are pronounced almost entirely as they are written. What is the use, sense, or wisdom of having a sign like a broken hoop \oslash to represent the final *o* of Italian, and therefore forcing the miserable boys to learn two methods of writing every time they learn a language, when it is so extremely easy to tell him that the final Italian *o* is often sounded like the English *o* in *not*? The refinements of pronunciation can be learnt at any time by any one who has a good ear, and who already knows the language pretty well, by a few months' stay in a foreign country: and a boy can go abroad, after all, at any period of his life. I admit that to attain this final perfection a knowledge of phonetic laws and the use of plaster casts of throats and larynxes may be recommended, but these devices are indescribably pernicious when employed in the instruction of beginners. They are the conceited invention of modern science, which, in its desire that we should scorn useless knowledge and become practical, would have us spend six years in acquiring a fine French accent in England, without

leaving us time to read a word of Molière. In the early stages of instruction in French I admit that the use of such an entirely rational and immediately comprehended script as that invented for the Faculté of Grenoble may be attended with profit, constructed as it is for the French language alone instead of being a complicated scientific universal affair which one can fit on to Czech and Turkish. This script from Grenoble clearly shows how words should be run together in reading French sentences, and how the accent and pause must come after groups of words pronounced without a break: yet it can be learnt in ten minutes. Next I admit that the teacher must be a master of French sound: I do not think it, however, at all advisable that he should be a Frenchman, although we may at all times call in a native to read to us or talk with us. An Englishman who with toil has acquired a fine French accent knows the difficulties with which the English boy has to contend so much better; he only will understand English as well as French phonetics; he will be able to explain that *o* and *e* are diphthongs in English without getting into a towering rage at the stupidity

and perverseness of the English boy, and if he is wise he will appeal to the boys to remember how a Frenchman talks English—an obvious way of getting boys to be interested in the pronunciation of French, yet which seems never to have occurred to any teachers.

We shall hardly attempt to teach boys to talk or write these languages unless they are especially interested in so doing; and if they are, we shall only teach them to talk and write French. This may displease some, but there are obvious reasons for our decision. Firstly, to learn a language so as to be able to go abroad and ask for a ticket at the station and a drink at the café is obviously part of technical training and not worthy the attention of serious educationalists. Secondly, an intelligent boy, if he wants to talk, must go to France, where in a family he will learn more in a week than we could teach him in a year. The true educational value of talking a language consists in getting the ear attuned to subtle, new, and delicate sounds, and this we preserve by emphasising the necessity of reading it aloud.

“ We shall perhaps then spend a little time

in French conversation, viewing it not as an end, but as a means towards eradicating that awkward shyness which some of the most pleasant and intelligent young Englishmen feel at opening their mouths before foreigners. But how much better it would be if we could send them abroad for a month a year to talk with French, German, and Italian boys, to view the beauties and delights of foreign towns, foreign institutions and foreign manners, if we could arrange for them to have some one better than the usual dreary *pasteur* or *pfarrer* to talk with, and to hear lectures by the most famous foreign teachers. If we were rich enough or powerful enough to institute this *wanderjahr* system for our boys, our training in modern languages would then become one of the most important and fascinating parts of their education.

“But if we cannot do this, we can initiate them into these three great literatures, and we can teach them to read foreign books, not at the rate of a page an hour, but swiftly and with pleasure. You may perhaps be a little surprised if I tell you on what part of French literature we shall lay greatest stress. For we shall not read very much French lyric

poetry: admirable as it is, its educational value is not very large to those who have read classical and English lyric verse. We shall follow consistently our plan of giving boys a pleasant introduction to subjects in which they may specialise afterwards if they will, and we will make no attempt to get them to read through all that is important in French lyrical verse, or indeed in any other branch of literature. Perhaps we shall do well if we confine ourselves to the *Oxford Book of French Verse*: it is a tolerable anthology, not much superior in anything but length to that admirable sixpenny *Cent Meilleurs Poèmes*, and woefully inferior to that splendid collection, the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. If we consider further what French lyric author a boy would do well to read through, I can think of none better than Leconte de Lisle: there is no more suitable book for boys in French than his clear and powerful *Poèmes Barbares*.

“We shall omit Erckmann - Chatrian’s *Waterloo* and the good but second-rate *Colomba* from our course, and no more dream of giving young boys Corneille and Racine than we would dream of trying to interest a

Frenchman in English by presenting him with *Paradise Lost*. At first we shall read such diverting and interesting books as *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, *Le Crime de Silvestre Bonnard*, and certain selected short stories. But it is the great French novelists who should be most esteemed by those who are training boys over seventeen years of age to face a world far less pleasant than our school. Only Hardy and Meredith among our so delightful English writers can ever impress the awakening mind so deeply with the tragic realities and possibilities of existence as do *Père Goriot*, *Charles Bovary*, *Une Vie*, and *Pierre et Jean*, books in which the ugliness of life is faced and the psychology of passion analysed, yet written at the inspiration of an ideal which is the more impressive because it is unconscious and full of the sense that a good deed is worth doing for its own sake, even if it be unromantic and unknown. To be recommended too are the quiet, humorous, thoughtful books of Anatole France, that gentleman socialist, whose graceful and bitter laughter reviles a world gone mad, a world which it

is our fond dream to better by producing some half dozen young men a year who are fit to face it.

“ We shall not need so much German as French, for the language is far harder and the literature, the importance of which is only a hundred years old, far less important. I shall be contented if we read in school the first part of *Faust*, the songs of Heine, part of Benzmann’s *Collection of Modern German Lyrics*. In reading German Jean Paul, Sudermann, and Nietzsche should not be neglected, for Nietzsche has an influence which all thoughtful men should understand, however much they may hate him, and a style second to none in German. Freytag and Grillparzer and other pompous triflers we shall neglect; but we shall remember that Heine wrote prose hardly inferior to his verse. We must attach, however, far more importance to the language of the Germans than their purely literary achievements could warrant. All boys who are interested in science, art, or archæology will soon find out that they must be able to read the barbarous prose of this most educated and learned people, since in every branch of pure

learning the Germans have produced some master work, some 'epoch-making' treatise.

"Italian we shall reinvest with the honour and importance which it has so unjustly lost since the first half of the nineteenth century. In the days of Peacock no gentleman with any pretension of culture could afford to dispense with a smattering of this delightful tongue, whose literature we now imagine to be represented by Dante, Petrarch, and the *Promessi Sposi* of Manzoni. It is sad to think that there are now not a hundred living Englishmen who know and enjoy the calm and classic humour of Ariosto, or who care anything for the countless masters of early Italian lyrical verse, which Eugenia Levi has collected in her two fascinating volumes. Yet no classical scholar can be excused for not taking the trouble to learn to read this easiest of languages, when a fortnight's work will enable him to read any average Italian prose with fluency and enjoyment.

"Our boys shall know a great deal of Dante, a little of Petrarch, the two great collections of Italian verse to which we have referred, besides a little anthology by Carducci, which

extends to the nineteenth century; nor shall they neglect to read the splendid *Barbarous Odes* of Carducci himself, which, based on the Horatian metres, form so brave a protest against the natural deficiency of a tongue wherein rhymes are too easy and compression too hard. Several of the tales of Boccaccio, even some of Bandello and Masuccio claim consideration, for they do not all consist, as some imagine, of indecent ribaldry, but are full of pathos, humour, and most cunning psychological observation; and why neglect the *Cortigiano*? Our playwrights shall be Goldoni and D'Annunzio: perhaps not the D'Annunzio of the terrible *Città Morta*, but certainly the D'Annunzio of *Francesca da Rimini*. For are we not the heirs of the Italian Renaissance, and shall we continue to neglect a literature not inferior to the French and far greater than the German, a literature which in the present age has produced at least two immortal names? Least of all can we dream of so doing after gazing at the masterpieces of Italian painting. Would it not be well to know what these great men read, thought, and wrote? Have we forgotten that Italy

is also the first, and will perhaps be the last, home of the purest and most noble music? To understand the spirit of the greatest artistic country the world has ever known, greater in my opinion than Greece herself by virtue of Leonardo and Michelangelo, not to mention Scarlatti and Pergolesi, is surely the direct duty of any one who desires to enjoy all that life can offer, and to assist others to share his delight.

“We must now consider the arts of representation, instruction in which will be such a peculiar and delightful feature of our school. We must adopt in teaching this subject methods similar to those we adopted for teaching poetry. I mean that we must not begin by laying down æsthetic laws, but by considering art historically. Numerous photographs, reproductions and casts must adorn our buildings or fill our portfolios. We must show magic-lantern slides, and we must take our boys to visit the great galleries at London and Hampton Court; and in this way we must form, as far as residents in England can do so, the basis of artistic experience. We shall have three direct ways of training our boys; they must notice things

in pictures, they must regard nature from an artistic point of view, and they must attempt to represent things for themselves. However clumsy their efforts be, every boy must draw and paint for at least three hours a week, not copying absurd patterns, but inventing for himself or imitating nature. Our object in this our practice of art, as in practice of poetry, will not be to train up artists—though who knows whether some young Velazquez will not suddenly discover his powers in this way?—but to enable boys to appreciate art, technically and soundly. Those who would be artists or architects must have special morning training for their professions. At all events we will have no sonneteering about art in the windbag style of John Addington Symonds, no vain talk of the grandeur, sweet loveliness, invincible truth, and tragic terror of pictures. We shall study rather to ensure a minute trained observation into shades of style and variations of detail; for only in this way can we teach boys not naturally artists to perceive every portion of a picture and not its subject alone. We shall also—and this will be a most important part of our pictorial educa-

tion—take bad and popular modern works—Luke Filde's "Doctor" or Dicksee's picture of the knight impressed by the crucifix—as examples of inferior art, and point out in these either the defects of drawing and colour or the complete inanity and vulgarity of idea.

"The introduction of this artistic education I consider the most revolutionary, the most important, of new proposals. It may interest you to know that I was for some time both at Oxford and Cambridge. I must have known some three hundred undergraduates, most of whom were considered or considered themselves to be the most intelligent young Englishmen of the day. Yet I do not remember more than four or five of them who could have told a Signorelli from a Titian, or who have ever heard the name of Pisanello. To possess any knowledge of art was considered by my otherwise intelligent friends to be something rather extraordinary and priggish. Perhaps indeed the character of an undergraduate art lover would be bound to suffer in so philistine an atmosphere. Yet there is no happier man than he who loves painted things, for the whole realm of nature

becomes exalted in his eyes: he looks at the world and imagines great pictures in his soul, he looks at great pictures and begins to realise the unspeakable beauty of the world. And what is Greece to those who do not love the sweet spring of her vases and the immortal strength of her statuary? How can men appreciate the great life of the modern world without knowing something of Manet, Pissarro, Whistler, and all those once obscure heroes who, despite penury and starvation, imprisoned the wonders of bright light on painted canvas? A few Japanese prints, or Persian miniatures, or Indian bronzes, are these not the only things that can suggest to us who cannot read those literatures or voyage to those lands the marvels of each racial individuality? Yet in our public schools, where still so much of the true humane education lingers, the artistic life is entrusted to some ill-paid pedagogue who has drawn a little at the Slade School, and is usually considered to be rather inferior in intellectual ability and social standing to the other members of the staff. It is perhaps the worst mistake in English public-school life, for even those boys who learn

drawing and excel in it will never get any real encouragement or help.

“I confess that my enthusiasm for music is not so great as my enthusiasm for the arts of representation. I have known only too many good musicians, especially those who were simply good performers, who outside this one specialised atmosphere were not only stupid, but exhibited the most appalling mental vulgarity. I do not view with favour perpetual toil on iron-frame pianos; I should like to leave the performance of instrumental music solely to those who show their love and capability—and musical genius is always revealed early in life. But every boy as soon as his voice is set or before it breaks might learn to read music and to sing in part; and one could have at least once a fortnight a concert for the hearing of which some boys would have been prepared by giving them the scores to read and explaining the modulations and subtleties of the tune. This is never done: the consequence is intelligent boys who have not exceptional gifts usually prefer the vilest musical comedy to Mozart. It is not they are deaf to sounds as a rule, but simply that they have no conception of the aim and structure of classical music.

“We have considered the education we intend to give in philology and fine arts. We must still examine whether we are to teach history, mathematics, and science.

“We shall have little difficulty in settling the place of history in our routine. No study seems more specious as a substitute for liberal education in the arts; yet it is dangerous to view it too seriously or give it too much importance. History is a fascinating tale which should be read only in the works of a great prose writer who is capable of doing it justice; but it is a story with so little of moral or of meaning, a story which may well make us discontented sceptics and cause us to despair of the progress of mankind. For philosophies of history have not succeeded: not even Hegel could thread together the promiscuous events of the world’s life into a connected whole.

“We say this, however, only as a warning to those who are too enthusiastic, or who imagine that the study of the historical method has a supreme value in education. It is obvious that our Grecians must have such acquaintance with history, and especially with modern history, as will enable them to understand the political life of the present

and the artistic life of the past. It is obvious that it will be good for them to read, not in class perhaps, but to themselves, such noble books as Gibbon, Mommsen, *Italy and her Invaders*, or Fyffe's *History of Modern Europe*; obvious that since they have to read Herodotus, Thucydides and Tacitus, we shall teach them in reference to these authors some of the latest results of historical research. Yet we need seldom insist on their learning dates and sketching out the plans of battles, nor shall we fatigue them with the history of the dull periods of the world. But in their last year at school those young men of twenty who are likely to be directly interested in the government of our country must specialise in modern history, in state theory, and in the science of economics.

“ But we shall find history most useful as a pleasant and instructive afternoon diversion for those not very intelligent boys who are working to enter a trade or profession; it is perhaps the simplest and most obvious method of inducing an ordinary mind to be interested in an extraneous world, for the very reason that it is too shallow a subject to have a prime importance in the higher education.

“I would suggest that our Grecians be compelled to learn sufficient mathematics to prevent their being put to shame in the affairs of life, and no more, unless they specially desire it. That a training in pure mathematics has an educational value I readily admit: it is beneficial if a boy be clever enough to apply mathematical principles to argument and discussion. But neither is it necessary to become an abstruse or advanced mathematician in order to be able to apply the elementary mathematical law, nor do boys who are trained in philosophical thought need to acquire the principles of logic by such circuitous means.

“Of the teaching of elementary arithmetic and geometry to the ordinary or young boy we have already dealt with Hofman’s aid; and I am thankful to say that there are distinct signs that our educationalists are weary of stocks, discount, and wall-papering. We have suggested that the younger boys will delight in working out the problems of simple geometry for themselves when they measure, buy, and design their wood constructions in the workshop. We hope that our Grecians will perpetuate a love for manual

craft of this kind: that they will long to construct ambitious models, to design furniture worthy of their artistic training, to paper their own rooms, and bind their own books. For not even the physical exercise which compels them to measure themselves in that athletic prowess for which a boy always has been and always will be most admired by his fellows will have a more salutary effect than the patient toil of saw and plane in keeping them from priggishness and from any form of dreamy intellectual superiority. Shall we let those whom we are training to be rulers be so stupid or haughty that they will have to sit still in cushioned seats while a hired mechanic repairs the incorrigible car?

“These remarks refer to applied science as much as to applied mathematics. But we must return a moment to the study of pure mathematical theory. We must hope to find a wonderful teacher who will suggest the mystery and charm of numbers to his pupils without perhaps directly saying a word about that mystery and charm; who will recognise that even among Grecians not one boy in a hundred is likely to become a great mathe-

matician, and will therefore make no attempt to weary his class by forcing them to work out innumerable examples, but rather hope to interest them in the delight he himself takes in mathematical problems by selecting the most fascinating and important examples of mathematical method.

“Natural science must now be our most difficult consideration. Science is an exacting mistress, and if I decide that we shall not insist on our Grecians penetrating its glorious secrets let no one think that I say this in a spirit of hostility or contempt, least of all while I sit here in view of Florence and remember that her triumphs of art are triumphs not of a mere vague æsthetic delight, but of inquisitive, patient, universal research into the nature of things and into the hidden laws of the world. By scientific study Uccelli learnt the joys of perspective, Signorelli some—alas, not all!—of the secrets of anatomy, Brunelleschi the architectural principle which enabled him to construct that huge and splendid dome that stands so quiet and impressive in the last hours of this far-shadowing afternoon.

“Yet science brooks no rival in her house;

he who would follow her must abandon other joys and spend long hours with her alone. To suggest to our Grecians the charms and delights of science will be our duty, but those who would set about to perfect themselves therein must do so in after years. But I will at all events give no countenance to the foolish and vulgar hostility with which so-called classical men too often treat science and her followers, though one can easily explain to them their foolish error. They see that the youth of England, with its puritan hatred of the useless and beautiful, strong in its all-pervading and plebeian common sense, has devoted itself to natural science with barbaric vigour. Also they have observed with disgust that even the oldest and firmest established homes of classical learning cannot entirely resist the clamour for a more profitable and vital course of instruction, that many of their pupils have abandoned the dissection of Latin periods for the dissection of flowers and corpses. Therefore it is that so many second-rate and a few first-rate but narrow classical scholars have raised this most vulgar outcry against the vulgarity of science, not perceiving that they are confus-

ing science with a section of her followers. Was Leonardo vulgar?

“Natural science unaccompanied by other studies is a poor training for the mind, though I can conceive it to be a far better one than these arid pedants could possibly give with their syntax and paradigms. Scientific men are so often headstrong in their own conceit: they are fond of laying down the law on subjects they have not attempted to master; and some of them, like Nordau, have the impertinence to pose as authorities on morality, æsthetics, and religion. The opinions and arguments of scientific men seldom rise above the level of a childish materialism which any serious philosopher could disprove in two minutes: they are utterly incapable of clear thought, yet imagine that philosophers must be muddle-headed because they are not persuaded by their “common-sense” arguments. Furthermore, they are either neglectful or contemptuous of most artistic life, though they are often fine musicians. A refined man, I admit, will never become vulgarised by science, but it seems very clear that science can never refine the vulgar.

“I do not think, then, that my Grecians

will be expected to do more than attend two weekly lectures delivered in non-technical language on scientific laws. The enthusiasts may work as much as they want: we shall provide laboratories, and specially encourage perhaps some of the less difficult branches of scientific study. I do not think, moreover, that our school museum will contain such a collection of riff-raff as may usually be found in those primitive establishments—bowls from Palestine, a pipe from Russia, specimens of Swiss pottery and Indian shells, a cork model of the Coliseum, twenty ill-stuffed birds under glass, and a photograph of the moon. We will attempt rather to give our museum a real and systematic interest, not crowding it with ethnological specimens unless we can afford a magnificent number, but rather priding ourselves on our neat and systematic collection of local flora and fauna.

“We have now considered the higher education. A word remains to be said on some few miscellaneous points.

“We have not mentioned the education of women. I do not think either the advantages or the dangers of co-educational schools are very great. The presence of girls cer-

tainly tends to prevent a boy from inclining to certain perversions, but it cannot be doubted that there is a grandeur and beauty about our monastic schools which the presence of women would destroy; and if one observes those who have been brought up in co-educational schools one is very apt to find them over-sentimental or otherwise eccentric. I think the girls reap practically all the benefit.

“I would rather women were educated by themselves, but I fear the inferiority of the female schoolmistress and indeed of the female mind is so great that they will never be educated as our Grecians are. For the ideal education for a woman would be exactly the education we give our Grecians—with a most special and most severe stress laid on philosophy and on free thought, in order to eradicate the sentimental viciousness of the sex; and women must learn above all to read their books unexpurgated without losing the modesty of youth—yet this it seems a boy can do often, and a woman never. Have we not seen that greatest of girls’ schools in the west of England? Have we not remarked its sumptuous buildings, pseudo-

antique, asymmetrical, gaudily tricked out in the most execrable taste? Have we not seen girls who have never heard of Augustus or Velazquez and could not see through a leading article, plodding through Beowulf, learning by heart their German grammar, acting before admiring friends such masterpieces of English literature as Charles Kingsley's *Saint's Tragedy*, and amusing themselves with chip carving? Did not that truly great woman who achieved so much in the emancipation of her sex from a tradition which permitted them to study little but singing and deportment write down that Latin was dangerous for girls to read, and commend the bracing effect of Hebrew and German poetry (Schiller's *Glocke*, forsooth, or the *Faust* seduction scene, I wonder?)? It is a pity, for where will our Grecians find women fit to be their life companions and friends?

"I might in this place make a brief observation with regard to day schools. There is only one argument that can be adduced in favour of day schools. They do not tend, like our great public schools, to create a monotonous type. Such an education as we should give would destroy the argument.

To my mind the great curse of day schools is that boys should live perpetually with their parents. Only one parent in a thousand is fit to manage an intelligent boy. A boy may be bullied in school: it will be nothing to the way in which he will be bullied at home if he is ever so little exceptional, ever so little inclined to disagree with the parental outlook. Then, again, if he is punished at a day school it is immediately known at home; every little punishment is a punishment twice over. It is a horrible system, this ceaseless double supervision.

“ I speak thus strongly not because I wish to break down family ties, but because I earnestly wish to preserve them. The boy who loves his parents rightly will be sad to leave them, rejoiced to find them again after many days. Their influence is deeper, finer, more pathetic when transmitted through loving letters and accepted in loving replies. The individual parent who, being human, must have foibles, is sunk in the ideal parent, the loving watcher over the destiny of his far-off child. Every honest man, recalling his own school days, will agree with me in this.

“ Another point. If you think, as perhaps

you do, that our education attempts too much, remember what we have cancelled from the ordinary sixth-form routine. Nearly all the preparation which occupies two hours every night is gone. All translation can be done very well unseen. Three hours a week for classics, three for drawing, an evening a week each for a philosophical discussion, a lecture in literature, a lecture in science or mathematics. Three hours each for reading the four great modern literatures; and three for the practice of English prose and verse. An hour for history, an hour a day in the library. Twenty-eight hours a week, excluding evenings. There is room to fill up what I have forgotten!

“We should next briefly consider the position our Grecians will occupy in school affairs. They will all be monitors, and no other boys, however successful athletically, however superior in character, will be given the honour. It is the tribute we shall pay in our school to intellectual pre-eminence, and only those who have been to a school which was ruled by the heroes of its Rugby football team can realise how admirable was the system which Arnold suggested. They will have the power of

punishing other boys by giving them detention; the actual punishment will be inflicted in this way under the supervision of the masters: there will be no physical appeal against their authority. In a school of about five hundred boys we may hope for thirty Grecians. They will have a common room, will alone have private studies, will be allowed when they are over seventeen to smoke and drink wine in moderation, for it will be our policy to encourage them in self-restraint, not to put temptation out of the way. The rest of the school will not be divided into houses. That is a pernicious system by which a boy only sees some thirty of his fellows, and cannot get away from the aggressiveness of those school-fellows whom he dislikes. We shall send our Grecians to keep order throughout the school and in the dormitories (which are to be open and not partitioned), and we hope in this way to test and prove their powers of government. Few realise or remember that it is much harder for the unpopular boy to manage his fellows than for an unpopular ministry to manage the State: no one is more relentless, ingenious, persistent in hatred, than the school-

boy who dislikes and despises those who are set over him. Our Grecians will be allowed to play games or not as they please, but we must insist that the captain of games in the school be a Grecian himself.

“I discussed with some impatience, if you remember, those who desired us to give instruction in morals. But that was not because we do not care about the morals of our Grecians, but because my imaginary objectors desired me to be immoral enough to tell them lies. But not even a γένναϊον ψεύδος will be admitted to defile the education of our Grecians, though I am afraid we may have to talk dogmatically to the rest of the school. The greatest moral influence that the Grecians can possibly receive must be their own tradition and public feeling, and the example of great books and the deep friendship and respect they feel for those high-principled men whom we hope to find to teach them. We will not say to boys who are reading Plato, ‘God wrote down in a book that you must not lie, therefore you will go to hell if you do so.’ We will not say to them that happiness in this earth belongs to the moral. But we will say to them, ‘The school, your

kind mother and gentle guardian, hates the vulgar and sensual life, and detests that which is mean and false: *hoc disce aut discede.*' And though we will not be as ruthless as some are to the natural faults of the headstrong, generous, and warm-blooded youth, yet if we consider a Grecian, however intelligent, to be ineradicably coarse, dishonest, or mean, he shall not remain in our society.

"And the last and most important of our considerations is the schoolmaster. Yet, strange as it may seem at first, I do not despair of finding ardent, learned, and admirable young men at our universities who would far rather teach than become dons or Indian magistrates if we gave them a salary worth the name, assured them a pension, and treated them with honour. Too often the modern schoolmaster has to take up his profession because there is nothing better for him to do; he is consequently and with some justice supposed to be a man not clever enough to obtain a fellowship or not energetic enough to enter the state service; he is a social outcast or a social failure; he ranks with the curate: he is an ill-dressed, ill-shaved nonentity. Our masters will be at

first men carefully chosen for their charm and intelligence, and not merely according to the results of their university work; later, the best of our old boys will rejoice to return to us and help us. Masters in La Giocosa are not treated as subordinates, but as honourable friends of the head-master. They live with him, dine with him nightly, and fare with the best. They are men who do not imagine their education is complete; they are a band of older Grecians. They need not be mewed up within school walls for three-quarters of the year, but must have all the society they can find, every chance of visiting London, every opportunity of conversing with specialists who come to lecture, and the wise men and travellers who come to visit.

“I think, strange to say, we shall find it easy to find those who will adequately teach our earnest and gentle-mannered Grecians. Shall we give less honour to those who do the ceaseless drudgery and rough work of the school, who help the infants to write, and read, and add, or try to drive the foolish through accidence and syntax? Shall we not rather let our chief masters do this diffi-

cult, elementary, noble work in turn, and not attempt to maintain a staff of less clever, less refined and serious men for this the hardest portion of the school work?

“ And the choice of masters and the success of the whole school must depend on one man, the grave and learned senior who is to be our head. Alas, that we cannot recall Vittorino from his grave! Yet if we could, what princes would send their sons to La Giocosa in these iron days? Who appreciates the humanities now apart from the picturesque dignity that hangs about them still? Who cares for any real thought about education? Who dares to make an ideal? Some listen to the conceited, lying scientist who writes pedantic treatises on habit, brain - formation and memory, and veils his tired platitudes in the ugliest of technical terms—and here they fondly imagine lies the secret of success. Some are willing to let our old beautiful schools rot away till they become hotels where the newly-rich may consort with the mattoid nobleman; in foolish calm they await the time when a relentlessly progressive age will hurl them aside in disgust. Never do they attempt a reform which is to make them

liker their true selves; but they cringe to public examinations and public feeling, and make each unworthy concession either with ill-grace or a puerile flourish of trumpets.

“But we will re-found La Giocosa, and build it anew in England beside the sea that typifies our race. And if I have made no single direct reference to patriotism, let me say this now. Patriotism is not taught by bad poetry and bad literature, by rifle clubs, or Union Jacks, or essays on Tariff Reform. La Giocosa will give England men of intelligence, fit to govern her, and not private soldiers fit to be shot down for her in some financial war. And in training Grecians La Giocosa has fulfilled her duty to England. Ours shall be no ideal school for the ideal youth, but a place where hard work is done, and where boys are toilfully prepared for the difficulties of a modern world; yet where too we shall train many to understand and love the sweet pleasures of the senses. We even hope that a few of our scholars will be among the great. Now, my friends, our long and toilsome journey is over: and it is evening.”

Evening indeed had come and the cool

hours of the day, but those two who listened to the unadorned words of this strange youth heard and understood the earnestness in his voice; and as they gazed at him while he lay there on the grass refolding his sheaf of papers, they thought of his gentle voice and eager words, and he seemed to them to be none other than one of his own Grecians, strayed from some Elysian school where Socrates and Vittorino teach and all the young lords of that shadow-world listen and admire. And whether their journey with him was ended, whether they would return to England to the old and weary toil strengthened by this secret and beautiful ideal, or whether they would not rather join him and rebuild La Giocosa to the sound of music in an Atlantean isle, in that swift minute of wonder they could hardly tell.

258763

Educ
F

Author Flecker, James Elroy

Title The Grecians.

NAME OF BORROWER

DATE

University of Toronto Library

DO NOT
REMOVE
THE
CARD
FROM
THIS
POCKET

Acme Library Card Pocket
Under Pat. "Ref. Index File"
Made by LIBRARY BUREAU

